

# SOIL SCIENCE

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## INDEX AUTHORS AND SUBJECTS

Volumes I-XXV  
1916-1928

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RUTGERS UNIVERSITY  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY  
U. S. A.

PUBLISHED BY  
THE WILLIAMS & WILKINS COMPANY  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

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## THE PREPARATION OF THE GENERAL INDEX

J. S. JOFFE AND HERMINIE B. KITCHEN

The general index for the first twenty-five volumes of *Soil Science* represents a condensed summary of investigations in the various fields of soil science, covering a period of more than a decade. Soil science has made rapid strides within the last decade. It allied itself with the fundamental sciences of biology, physics, and chemistry in an attempt to solve the riddles of the soil-plant relationships. The general index reflects the relation of soil science to the fundamental sciences.

The index has been prepared so that the contents of the journal may be made more readily accessible. There will be no need of turning to the table of contents of each volume, which in itself is not complete, as it gives only titles of papers. Neither are the individual volume indexes sufficiently complete. They are, for this reason, of limited value. This is especially true of the early volumes. It was felt, therefore, that a general index prepared from the original papers, with no reference to the existing single volume indexes, would aid greatly in the orientation of the material published in *Soil Science*.

The index as compiled is a classified directory of investigations conducted and recorded. The trained worker in the field of soil science will readily find in the index the particular subject in which he is interested; and the novice will find it a helpful guide. He will be able to avoid unnecessary repetitions, to obtain leads in the various branches of the science, and to utilize the facts known and interpreted in the pages of the first twenty-five volumes of *Soil Science*.

The index reflects the development of the science. One may note, for instance, that the entries on ammonification, frequent in the earlier volumes, gradually decrease. There was a time when the soil biological investigations were centering around ammonification studies. Gradually, however, the nature of the process was elucidated and found to be less important than anticipated for an insight into the microbiological activities of the soil. A similar development of the other branches of soil science may be traced from the pages of the index.

In compiling the index, thoroughness, accuracy, and consideration for the user were duly stressed.

Many subjects were cross-referenced and some were repeatedly indexed under different headings. The latter meant a repetition of the indexed subject, but it should prevent the searcher from missing the subject. For example, one would expect to find the subject of "Roterde" indexed under "Soil" or "Soils," but it is also given as an independent entry.

The material in the index was so arranged as to stimulate the searcher—to give him a lead to the other topics which may have a bearing on the subject. Thus if one studies the value of ammonium sulfate he should be led into the field of nitrification.

In many cases the senior author of the index placed himself in the position of index-user whenever a decision had to be made as to the best heading to be selected for a particular entry. However, this procedure was not allowed to overemphasize the significance of the personal equation.

An effort has been made to eliminate word indexing as far as possible and to compile entries under one heading. To be sure, this last task was not fully accomplished. The traditional use of terms like "Lime," "Liming," "Calcium Carbonate," or "Limestone" has been retained, even though they may refer to the same thing. There is no authoritative plan as to which of these terms is to be preferred. "Acidity" and "H-ion Concentration" offer another example. In the indexing of any of these terms the usage of the author was respected.



## AUTHOR INDEX

### A

- Abbot, E. V.** Occurrence and action of fungi, 16: 207.
- Adams, H. R.** Effects of sulfur on crops and soils, 18: 111.
- Adams, J. R.** See **Edgington, G.**
- Alben, A. O.** See **Clark, M. A.,** Humfeld, H., and.
- Albrecht, W. A.** Symbiotic nitrogen fixation, 9: 275; nitrate accumulation under straw mulch, 14: 299.
- Albrecht, W. A.,** and **Uhlend, R. E.** Nitrate accumulation under straw mulch, 20: 253.
- Ali, B.** See **Wilsdon, B. H.**
- Allicante, M. M.** Viability of nodule bacteria: I, II, 21: 27; viability of nodule bacteria: III, IV, V, 93.
- Allison, F. E.** Changes in soil during storage, 3: 37; studies with ammonium phosphate, 5: 1; nitrate assimilation by soil microorganisms, 24: 79; see **Brown, P. E.;** **Cook, R. C.;** **Fellers, C. R.**
- Allison, F. E.,** and **Coleman, D. A.** Biological variations, 3: 499.
- Allison, F. E.,** and **Cook, R. C.** Effect of ammonium sulfate, 3: 507.
- Allison, R. V.** Effect of aeration on growth of barley, 17: 97; protozoan fauna of United States soils, 18: 339.
- Allison, R. V.,** and **Shive, J. W.** Micro-sampling for determination of dissolved oxygen, 15: 489.
- Alten, F.** See **Blanck, E.**
- Alway, F. J.** See **Rost, C. O.**
- Alway, F. J.,** and **Blish, M. J.** The loess soils of Nebraska, II, 1: 239.
- Alway, F. J.,** and **Harmer, P. M.** Minnesota glacial soil studies: II, 23: 57.
- Alway, F. J.,** and **Isham, G. R. M.** The loess soils of Nebraska, III, 1: 299.
- Alway, F. J.,** and **McDole, G. R.** The loess soils of Nebraska, I, 1: 197.
- Alway, F. J.,** **McDole, G. R.,** and **Rost, C. O.** Loess soils of Nebraska: VI, 3: 9.
- Alway, F. J.,** and **Rost, C. O.** The loess soils of Nebraska, IV, 1: 405; phosphorus in prairie soil, 2: 493.
- Ames, J. W.,** and **Boltz, G. E.** Effect of sulfonation and nitrification, 7: 183.
- Ames, J. W.,** and **Gerdel, R. W.** Potassium content of plants, 23: 199; determining soil nutrient deficiency, 455.
- Ames, J. W.,** and **Richmond, T. E.** Fermentation of manure, 4: 79; sulfonation in relation to nitrogen transformation, 5: 311; effect of sulfonation and nitrification, 6: 351.
- Ames, J. W.,** and **Schollenberger, C. J.** Accumulation of salts in Ohio soils, 1: 575; calcium and magnesium content of soil, 8: 323.
- Anderegg, F. O.,** and **Lutz, R. P.** Base exchange in soils, 24: 403.
- Anderson, J. A.** The influence of available nitrogen, 21: 115.
- Anderson, J. A.,** **Peterson, W. H.,** and **Fred, E. B.** Production of pyruvic acid by nodule bacteria, 25: 123.
- Appleman, C. O.** Percentage of carbon dioxide in soil air, 24: 241.
- Archibald, R. G.** Sulfuric acid treatment of cotton seed, 23: 1; black arm disease of cotton, 5.
- Arnd, Th.** Acidity of peat soil (abst.), 20: 357; humic acids (abst.), 22: 216.
- Arndt, C. H.** Salt requirements of *Lupinus albus*, 21: 1.
- Arrhenius, O.** Fertility of rice soils and titration curves, 14: 21; potential acidity of soils, 223; lime requirements of the soil (abst.), 20: 355; soil reaction and the growth of higher plants (abst.), 22: 216; soil reaction and biological physico-chemical soil factors (abst.), 216.
- Aureli, F.** See **Perotti, R.**
- Austin, R. H.** Mono-calcium phosphate and soils, 24: 263; see **Spurway, C. H.**
- Auten, J. T.** Organic phosphorus content of Iowa soils, 13: 119; organic phosphorus of soils, 16: 281.

## B

- Bahrt, G. M. *See* Russel, J. C., Jones, E. G., and.
- Baker, W. G. *See* Harper, H. J., Boatman, B., and Boatman, J. L.
- Baldwin, I. L. Effect of petroleum on soil flora, 14: 465.
- Baldwin, I. L., and Fred, E. B. Fermentation characters of root nodule bacteria, 24: 217.
- Balks, R. Formation and decomposition of humus (abst.), 22: 213.
- Barnett, C. R. Library exhibit of Soil Science Congress, 25: 97.
- Barnette, R. N. Synthetic calcium silicates I, 18: 479; II, 21: 443; III, 22: 459.
- Barnette, R. M., and Shive, J. W. Influence of solution volume upon plant growth, 15: 413.
- Barnicot, W. The human element in the work at Rothamsted, 14: 175.
- Barthel, C., and Bengtsson, N. Influence of lime on nitrification of manure, 8: 243; stable manure and cellulose description, 18: 185.
- Bartholomew, R. P. Quantitative determination of nitrites, 25: 393.
- Batchelor, H. W. *See* Gibbs, W. M., Neidig, R. E., and; Gibbs, W. M., and Magnuson, H. P.
- Batham, H. N. Nitrification in soils, 20: 337; nitrification in soils, II, 24: 187.
- Bauer, F. C. Effect of leaching on rock phosphate, 9: 235; power of plants to utilize rock phosphate, 12: 21.
- Bauer, F. C., and Haas, A. R. C. Plant and soil acidity, 13: 461.
- Baver, L. D. Quinhydrone electrode for measuring soil pH, 21: 167; hydrogen-ion concentration of soils, 23: 399.
- Bear, F. E. Bacterial activity and lime requirement, 4: 433.
- Bear, F. E., and McClure, G. M. Sampling soil plots, 9: 65.
- Bear, F. E., and Workman, A. C. Ammonia-fixing capacity of calcium sulfate, 7: 283.
- Beattie, J. H. *See* Skinner, J. J.
- Beaumont, A. B., Sessions, A. C., and Kelly, O. W. Nitrate accumulation under a mulch, 24: 177.
- Beckett, S. H. Determination of volume-weight of soils, 25: 481.
- Beckwith, C. S. Effect of fertilizers on the yield of cranberries, 8: 483; effect of fertilizers on blueberries, 10: 309; effect of fertilizers on cranberry land, 12: 183; *see* Lipman, J. G., Blair, A. W., Martin, W. H., and.
- Belling, W. *See* Kappen, H.
- Bengtsson, N. Determination of ammonia in soil, 18: 255; *see* Barthel, C.
- Bennett, H. H. Humid-tropical and humid-temperate American soil, 21: 349; The Soils of Cuba (book review), 25: 495.
- Benton, T. H. *See* Potter, R. S.
- Berkman, A. H. Effect of soil reaction on incidence of plants, 25: 133.
- Bimschas, J. Water transport through the soil (abst.), 20: 359.
- Bizzel, J. A. *see* Lyon, T. L., and Wilson, B. D.
- Blair, A. W. *See* Lipman, J. G.; Lipman, J. G., McLean, H. C., and Prince, A. L.; Lipman, J. G., Prince, A. L., and; Martin, W. H., and Beckwith, C. S.
- Blair, A. W., and Brown, B. E. Influence of borax on potatoes and corn, 11: 369.
- Blair, A. W., and McLean, H. C. Influence of lime on corn, 1: 489; nitrogen and carbon content of cultivated and uncultivated soils, 4: 283.
- Blair, A. W., and Prince, A. L. Veitch method compared with hydrogen-ion concentration, 9: 253; nitrate nitrogen and pH values of soils, 14: 9; toxic properties of soils, 15: 109; influence of nitrogen treatment on soil composition, 16: 115; distribution of nitrates in soil, 17: 323; phosphorus and potash, relation to crop yield and N recovery, 327; changes in cylinder soils, 18: 31; availability of nitrogen, 19: 467; relation of soil reaction to active aluminum, 24: 205; influence of dry organic matter on crop yields, 25: 281.
- Blanck, E., and Alten, F. Characterization and discrimination of "Roterde" (abst.), 20: 361; contributions to the formation of Mediterranean "Roterde" (abst.), 362; classification of "Roserde" (abst.), 22: 213; formation of "Roserde" (abst.), 213.

- Blanck, E.**, and Giesecke, F. Influence of earthworms on the physical and biological properties of the soil (abst.), 20: 362.
- Blanck, E.**, and Lohmann, W. Transformation of quicklime into carbonated lime (abst.), 20: 356.
- Blish, M. J.** See **Alway, F. J.**
- Boatman, B.** See **Harper, H. J.**, Baker, W. G., and Boatman, J. L.
- Boatman, J. L.** See **Harper, H. J.**, Baker, W. G., Boatman, B., and.
- Bobko, E. W.**, and Druschin, D. W. Reaction of soil solution (abst.), 22: 213.
- Bollen, W. B.** Biochemical effects of gypsum on Iowa soils, 9: 417; see **Halversen, W. V.**
- Bollen, W. B.**, and Neidig, R. E. Uniformity of soil solution analysis, 24: 69.
- Bollenbeck, K.** See **Kappen, H.**
- Boltz, G. E.** See **Ames, J. W.**
- Bondorff, K. A.**, and Christensen, H. R. Determination of organic matter, 15: 361.
- Born, O.** Soil cultivation (abst.), 17: 431.
- Bornemann.** Carbon dioxide nutrition of cultivated plants (abst.), 20: 360.
- Bouyoucos, G. J.** New classification of soil moisture, 11: 33; concentration of solution around soil particles, 131; unfree water in soils, 255; fertility of the soils of Greece, 13: 63; heat of wetting, moisture equivalent and unfree water, 14: 431; oxidation in soil-forming rock, 15: 19; ignition and physical properties of soils, 17: 135; influence of water on soil granulation, 18: 103; heat of wetting and colloidal determination, 19: 153; heat of wetting of soil colloids, 477; heat of wetting of soils, 20: 67; do colloids exist as a soil coating, 21: 481; contraction and expansion of wetted soils, 23: 119; heat of reaction of artificial and soil gels, 243; determining soil colloids by the hydrometer, 319; hydrometer for mechanical analysis of soil, 343; hydrometer method for studying soils, 25: 365; mechanical analysis of soils in fifteen minutes, 473.
- Bouyoucos, G. J.**, and McCool, M. M. Causes of frost occurrence in muck soils, 14: 383; soil aeration as influenced by barometric pressure, 18: 53.
- Bradfield, R.** Hydrogen-ion concentration control in soils, 17: 411.
- Bradfield, R.**, and Cowan, E. W. Effect of pH on calcium absorption, 24: 365.
- Bremer, O.** Ease of cultivation of various soils (abst.), 20: 358.
- Brewer, P. H.**, and Carr, R. H. Relation of iron and manganese to soil fertility, 23: 165.
- Brigham, R. O.** Assimilation of organic nitrogen, 3: 155.
- Brockmann, C.**, and Hissink, D. J. Black clay of Thesinge (abst.), 17: 434.
- Brother, G. H.** See **Upson, F. W.**, Calvin, J. W., and.
- Brown, B. E.** See **Blair, A. W.**
- Brown, P. E.** Soil experiment fields and their value, 14: 369.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Allison, F. E. Influence of N-C ratio in humus on bacteria, 1: 49.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Corson, G. E. Ferrification in soils, 2: 549.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Hitchcock, E. B. Effects of alkali salts on nitrification, 4: 207.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Johnson, H. W. Studies in sulfication, 1: 339.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Minges, G. A. Effect of manganese on soils, 2: 67.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Stallings, J. H. Inoculated legumes as nitrogenous fertilizers, 12: 365.
- Brown, P. E.**, and Warner, H. W. Production of phosphorus from rock phosphate, 4: 269.
- Brown, S. M.** See **Kelley, W. P.**
- Brugues, C.** Colloidal clay (abst.), 19: 37.
- Brüne, F.**, and Tacke, B. Phosphorus requirement of lupines (abst.), 20: 354.
- Bryan, O. C.** Effect of reaction on nodule formation, 13: 271; effect of reaction on some legumes, 15: 23; effect of acid soils on nodule-forming bacteria, 37; effect of reaction on oats and wheat, 375; see **Fred, E. B.**; **Parker, F. W.**
- Buckner, G. D.**, Peter, A. M., and Kinney, E. J. Sodium nitrate tolerated by tobacco plants, 10: 487.

- Bulsson du, J. P.** Effect of volatile anti-septics, 3: 353.
- Bulli, M., and Fernandez, L.** Method for the determination of potash in agricultural and industrial materials (abst.), 19: 81.
- Bullis, D. E.** See **Robinson, R. H.**
- Burd, J. S.** Chemical criteria and physical classification of soils, 5: 405; relation of biological processes to cation concentration, 20: 269.
- Burd, J. S., and Martin, J. C.** Changes in the soil solution, 18: 151.
- Burgess, P. S.** Azotobacter in Hawaiian soils, 2: 183; nitrification and availability of calcium carbonate, 4: 327; biological data as an indication of soil fertility, 6: 449; the soil solution, 14: 191; determination of "active" aluminum in acid soils, 15: 131; "active" aluminum and hydrogen-ion in acid soils, 407; effect of calcium and magnesium upon soil reaction, 18: 169; see **Lipman, C. B.**
- Burke, V. and Burkey, L.** Modifying Rhizobium radicicolum, 20: 143.
- Burkey, L.** See **Burke, V.**
- Burr, W. W.** See **Russel, J. C.**
- Burt, F. A.** Soil mineralogy (book review), 24: 297.
- Buswell, A. M., and Neave, S. L.** Nitrogen losses through denitrification, 24: 285.
- Butler, J. R.** See **Koch, G. P.**
- C**
- Calvin, J. W.** See **Upson, F. W., and Brother, G. H.**
- Carleton, E. A.** Jones method compared with hydrogen-ion concentration, 16: 79; litmus test for soil reaction, 91.
- Carr, R. H.** Is humus a guide to fertility? 3: 515; vegetative growth in soils containing crude petroleum, 8: 67; see **Brewer, P. H.**
- Carroll, W. R.** See **Sears, O. H.**
- Carter, E. G.** See **Greaves, J. E.; Greaves, J. E., and Lund, Y.**
- Christensen, H. R.** Determining the reaction of soils, 4: 115; ability of soil to break down mannite, 15: 329; see **Bondorff, K. A.**
- Christie, A. W.** See **Hoagland, D. R.**
- Christie, A. W., and Martin, J. C.** Volumetric determination of sulfates in soils, 4: 477; effect of CaO and CaCO<sub>3</sub> on nutrients in soils, 5: 383.
- Clapp, F. C.** See **Rost, C. O.**
- Clark, N. A., and Collins, E. R.** Quinhydrone electrode and soil reaction, 24: 453.
- Clark, N. A., Humfeld, C. H., and Alben, A. O.** Electrodialysis of soils and Mattson cell 24: 291.
- Clark, N. A., and Roller, E. M.** "Auximones" and the growth of the green plant, 17: 193.
- Clevenger, C. B.** Hydrogen-ion concentration of plant juices, I, 8: 217; II, 227.
- Cobb, N. A.** The mononchs, 3: 431.
- Coe, D. G.** Effects of fertilizing methods on crops and soils, 21: 7; effects of fertilizing methods on crop yields, 127.
- Coleman, D. A.** Activity of soil fungi, 2: 1; sodium nitrate and nitrogen transformations, 4: 345; see **Lint, H. C.; Kopleoff, N.; Allison, F. E.**
- Coleman, D. A., Lint, H. C., and Kopeloff, N.** Can soil be sterilized without radical alteration? 1: 259.
- Collins, E. R.** See **Clark, N. A.**
- Collins, G. H.** Influence of boron on soybean growth, 23: 83.
- Comber, N. M.** An Introduction to the Scientific Study of the Soil, (book review) 25: 495.
- Comber, N. M., and Saint, S. J.** Note on the absorption of bases by soils, 18: 131.
- Conn, H. J.** Demonstrating soil fungi by microscope, 14: 149; bacteriological study of a soil type, 25: 263.
- Connor, S. D., and Sears, O. H.** Relation of aluminum salts and acids to plant growth, 13: 23.
- Cook, R. C.** Effect of grinding on lime requirement, 1: 95; media for soil bacteria, 153; absorption of ammonia by soils, 2: 305; see **Waksman, S. A.; Allison, F. E.**
- Cook, R. C., and Allison, F. E.** Effect of soil reaction on availability of (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, 3: 487.
- Corrado, L.** Amides and denitrifying process in the soil (abst.), 19: 38.

- Corson, G. E. *See* Brown, P. E.  
 Cowan, E. W. *See* Bradfield, R.  
 Crawford, E. M. *See* MacIntire, W. H.,  
 Shaw, W. M.  
 Cromer, C. O. *See* Noyes, H. A.  
 Cummins, A. B. *See* Kelley, W. P.  
 Curtis, R. E. *See* Waksman, S. A.
- D**
- Dachnowski, A. P. Peat deposits in the  
 United States, 10: 453; stratigraphic  
 study of peat deposits, 17: 107.  
 Dachnowski-Stokes, A. P. Study of peat-  
 lands, 25: 85.  
 Daniloff, K. B. *See* Newton, G. A.  
 Davenport, A. *See* Fred, E. B.  
 Davis, A. R. Variability of plants grown in  
 water cultures, 11: 1; *see* Lipman, C. B.,  
 and West, E. S.  
 Davis, J. J. Miscellaneous soil insecticide  
 tests, 10: 61.  
 Davison, W. C. *See* Waksman, S. A.  
 Dayhuff, W. C., and Hoagland, D. R.  
 Electrical charge on a clay colloid, 18:  
 401.  
 De Capitanti da Vimercate, S. Cultivation  
 in relation to irrigation (abst.), 19: 37.  
 De Fiestois, R. Origin of sodium nitrate  
 (abst.), 19: 37.  
 Denison, I. A. Nature of aluminum salts  
 in the soil, 13: 81.  
 Densch, A., and Hunnius, T. Action of  
 increased carbon-dioxide supply in the  
 field (abst.), 17: 433; influence of the  
 soil-water content on the yield, on the  
 grain-straw ratio, and on the phosphorus  
 nutrition of oats (abst.), 20: 355;  
 studies on the growth of oats (abst.),  
 22: 216.  
 Densch, Hunnius, and Pfaff. Soil acidity  
 problem (abst.), 20: 357.  
 De Turk, E. A source of potassium for plant  
 growth, 8: 269.  
 Deuber, C. G. Plant iron from potassium  
 and ferric ferrocyanides, 21: 23.  
 D'Ippolito, G. Fertilizing effect of sulfur  
 (abst.), 19: 82; action of manganese  
 upon plant growth (abst.), 85.  
 Doerell, E. G. *See* Stoklasa, J.  
 Domontovitch, M. K. *See* Priyanishnikov,  
 D. N.  
 Doyne, H. C., and Morison, C. G. T.  
 Absorption of iron by soils, 22: 163.  
 Druschinin, D. W. *See* Bobko, E. W.  
 Dubos, R. J. *See* Waksman, S. A.  
 Duley, F. L. Soil acidity and results from  
 liming, 17: 213; movable lysimeter for  
 soil studies, 20: 465; loss of soluble  
 salts in runoff water, 21: 401.  
 Duley, F. L., and Jones, M. M. Effects of  
 soil treatments upon draft of plows,  
 21: 277.  
 Duruz, W. P. Control of the root-nematode,  
 4: 481.
- E**
- Edgington, G., and Adams, J. R. Distribu-  
 tion of nitrogen in podzol profile, 20:  
 177.  
 Egorov (Yegorov), M. A. Reversion of  
 phosphoric acid in soils, 25: 463.  
 Ellet, W. B., and Harris, W. G. Composting  
 of rock phosphate and sulfur, 10: 315.  
 Elvehjem, C. A. *See* Peterson, W. H.,  
 and Jamison, L. A.  
 Emerson, P. Soil bacteria and strepto-  
 thrices, 3: 417; colorimetric determina-  
 tion of soil nitrates, 12: 413.  
 Engels, Solubility of soil plant food (abst.),  
 17: 431.  
 English, D. T., and Lunt, H. A. Effect of  
 potassium upon diastatic activity of  
 plants, 20: 459.  
 Erdman, L. W. Effect of gypsum on soil  
 reaction, 12: 433; sulfur content of  
 rainwater, 14: 363; effect of gypsum on  
 Iowa soils, 15: 137.  
 Eschenhagen, M. Potassium nutrition of  
 young rye plants (abst.), 20: 355.  
 Ewing, S. Movement of water vapor  
 through quartz flour, 13: 57.
- F**
- Feirer, W. A. Obligate thermophilic bacteria  
 from soil, 23: 47.  
 Fellers, C. R. Studies on agar agar, 2:  
 255; the occurrence of *Bacterium lactis*  
 in soil, 5: 487; commercial cultures of  
 bacteria, 6: 53; composition and nodule  
 formation of soybeans, 81; longevity of  
*B. radicola* on legume seeds, 7: 217.

- Fellers, C. R., and Allison, F. E. Protozoan fauna of New Jersey soils, 9: 1.
- Fernandez, L. See Bulli, M.
- Ferrara, A., and Titta, G. Water from Vadi Gattarg River, Cyrenaica (abst.), 19: 39.
- Fetzer, W. R. See Morrow, C. A.
- Fieger, E. See Rost, C. O.
- Fife, J. M. Effect of sulfur on microflora of soil, 21: 245.
- Fisher, R. A. See Thornton, H. G.
- Fleetwood, J. R. Soluble calcium and response to liming, 19: 441.
- Fleming, W. E. Relation of fungi to numbers of bacteria in soil, 19: 301.
- Flenner, A. L., See Lichtenwalner, D. C., and Gordon, N. E.
- Fowler, L. W. See Lipman, C. B.
- Frazier, W. C. See Fred, E. B., Wright, W. H., and.
- Frazier, W. C., and Fred, E. B. Movement of legume bacteria in soil, 14: 29.
- Fred, E. B. Effect of organic substances on seed germination, 6: 333; fixation of atmospheric nitrogen by soybeans, 11: 469; influence of nitrifying bacteria on barley, 18: 323; see Haas, A. R. C.; Waksman, S. A.; Frazier, W. C.; Schmidt, E. G., Peterson, W. H., and; Viljoen, J. A.; Whiting, A. L., and Helz, G. E.; Baldwin, I. L.; Peterson, W. H., Parmele, H. B., and; Anderson, J. A., Peterson, W. H., and.
- Fred, E. B., and Bryan, O. C. Effect of nodule bacteria on peas, 14: 413.
- Fred, E. B., and Davenport, A. Organic compounds and nitrification, 11: 389.
- Fred E. B., and Graul, E. J. Factors influencing nitrate formation 1: 317; effect of inoculation and lime of soybeans, 7: 455.
- Fred, E. B., Wright, W. H., and Frazier, W. C. Field tests on the inoculation of canning peas 11: 479.
- Fresenius, L. Soil acidity (abst.), 22: 213; see Lemmermann, O.
- Fudge, J. F. See Parker, F. W.
- Fulmer, H. L. Relation of green manures to nitrogen fixation, 4: 1.
- Funchess, M. J. Acids soils and the toxicity of manganese 8: 69.
- Galney, P. L. Effect of cultivation upon bacteria, 2: 193; nitrification as a factor in soil fertility, 3: 399; formation of carbon dioxide in soil, 7: 293; inoculating soil with azotobacter, 20: 73; see Swanson, C. O., and Latshaw, W. L.
- Gardner, W. Movement of moisture in soil by capillarity, 7: 313; capillary moisture-holding capacity, 319; a new soil elutriator, 9: 191; a capillary transmission constant, 10: 103; capillary potential and soil-moisture constants, 357; see Jennings, D. S., Thomas, M. D., and.
- Gardner W., and Widtsoe, J. A. The movement of soil moisture, 11: 215.
- Gedroiz, K. K. The HCl method for determining absorbed cations, 16: 473.
- Gehring, A., and Schulke, G. Effect of lime on soils (abst.), 22: 214.
- Gehring, A., and Wehrmann, O. Effect of lime upon soils (abst.), 22: 214.
- Gemmerling, V. V. Characterization of soil types from data of absorbed bases (abst.), 17: 429.
- Gerdel, R. W. See Ames, J. W.
- Gericke, W. F. Effect of salts on soils, 3: 271; relation of protein content to periods of growth, 13: 135; effect of nitrogen application on protein of grain, 14: 103; growing wheat in one-salt solutions, 15: 69; see Lipman, C. B.
- Gering and Sander, Study on soil acidity (abst.), 17: 432.
- Gerretsen, F. C. Nitrification and denitrification in tropical soils (abst.), 17: 433.
- Gerretsen, F. C., Gryns, A., Sack, J., and Söhnngen, N. L. Bacteriophage in the nodules of the leguminous plants (abst.), 17: 434.
- Gibbs, W. M. Isolation and study of nitrifying bacteria, 8: 427.
- Gibbs, W. M., and Batchelor, H. W. Effect of tree products on soil bacteria: II, 24: 351.
- Gibbs, W. M., Batchelor, H. W., and Magnuson, H. P. Effects of alkali salts; I, ammonification, 19: 343; II, nitrification, 357; III, crop yield, 371.



- Gibbs, W. M., Neidig, R. E., and Batchelor, H. W. Determining ammonia in alkali soils, 15: 261.
- Gibbs, W. M., and Werkman, C. H. Effect of tree products on soil bacteria, 13: 303.
- Giesecke, F. *See* Blanck, E.
- Gilbert, B. E. *See* McLean, F. T.
- Gilbert, B. E., McLean, F. T., and Hardin, L. J. Relation of manganese and iron to chlorosis, 22: 437.
- Gile, P. L. Colloidal soil material, 25: 359.
- Gillespie, L. J. Determination of hydrogen-ion concentration, 9: 115; reduction potentials of bacterial cultures and soils, 199.
- Gillespie, L. J., and Hurst, L. A. Hydrogen-ion concentration in soils, 4: 313; hydrogen-ion concentration, 6: 219.
- Ginsburg, J. M. Respiration apparatus for plant studies, 19: 411; relation of essential mineral elements to plants, 20: 1.
- Ginsburg, J. M., and Shive, J. W. Metabolism in the soybean plant, 22: 175.
- Girsberger, J., and McCrory, S. H. Application of soil science to land cultivation, 25: 83.
- Givan, C. V. *See* Veihmeyer, F. J.
- Gordon, A., and Lipman, C. B. Cause of infertility of serpentine soils, 22: 291.
- Gordon, N. E. *See* Wiley, R. C.; Starkey, E. B.; Lichtenwalner, D. C., Flenner, A. L., and.
- Gordon, N. E., and Starkey, E. B. Influence of soil colloids on availability of salts, 14: 1.
- Gortner, R. A. Estimation of calcium oxide in peat, 1: 505; organic matter of soil: I, 2: 395; organic matter of soil: II, 539; organic matter of soil: III, 3: 1; *see* Morrow, C. A.
- Gortner, R. A., and Shaw, W. M. Interference of vanadium, 2: 299; organic matter of soil: IV, 3: 99.
- Gottsch, H. Behavior of the soil to water (abst.), 17: 430.
- Gowda, R. N. Oxidation of ammonia and nitrites by microorganisms, 17: 57; nitrites and nitrification, 333.
- Grandis, G. *See* Perotti, R.
- Graul, E. J. *See* Fred, E. B.
- Gray, F. J. *See* MacIntire, W. H., and Shaw, W. M.
- Greaves, J. E. Influence of salts on soil bacteria, 2: 443; azofication, 6: 163, antagonistic action of calcium and iron salts, 10: 77; microflora and productivity of alkali soils, 23: 271; *see* Hirst, C. T.
- Greaves, J. E., and Carter, E. G. Action of some common soil amendments, 7: 121; influence of moisture on soil bacteria, 10: 361; influence of moisture and salts on the soil, 13: 251.
- Greaves, J. E., Carter, E. G., and Lund, Y. Influence of salts on azofication in soil, 13: 481.
- Greaves, J. E., and Hirst, C. T. Determination of nitric nitrogen in the soil, 4: 179.
- Greaves, J. E., Hirst, C. T., and Lund, Y. The leaching of alkali soil, 16: 407.
- Greaves, J. E., and Lund, Y. Osmotic pressure and the toxicity of salts, 12: 163.
- Greaves, J. E., and Nelson, D. H. Iron, Chlorine and sulfur contents of grain, 19: 325.
- Greaves, J. E., Stewart, R., and Hirst, C. T. Nitrous nitrogen in soil, 3: 149.
- Gruzit, O. M. Effect of acids on bacteria, 3: 289.
- Gryns, A. *See* Gerretsen, F. C., Sack, J., and Sohngen, N. L.
- Gustafson, A. F. Effect of drying soils on water-soluble constituents, 13: 173.

## H

- Haag, J. R. *See* McCall, A. G.
- Haas, A. R. C. Electrometric titration of plant juices, 7: 487; reaction of plant juices, 9: 341; *see* Bauer, F. C.
- Haas, A. R. C. and Fred, E. B. Effect of soybean germination on bacteria, 7: 237.
- Hager, G. Acidity in mineral soils (abst.), 22: 214.
- Haley, D. E. Availability of potassium in orthoclase, 15: 167; *see* Mack, W. B.
- Haley, D. E., and Holben, F. J. A biological measurement of soil potassium, 24: 345.
- Hall, T. D. Nitrification in some South African soils, 12: 301; II, 18: 219.

- Hall, T. D.**, and Vogel, J. C. Reversion of acid phosphate, 15: 367.
- Halstead, C. E.** See **Meler, H. F.**
- Halsted, B. D.**, and Waksman, S. A. Soil temperatures, 3: 393.
- Halversen, W. V.**, and Bollen, W. B. Sulfur oxidation in Oregon soil, 16: 479.
- Halvorson, H. O.** See **Starkey, R. L.**
- Hansen, R.** See **Whiting, A. L.**
- Hardin, L. J.** See **Gilbert, B. E.**, **McLean, F. T.**, and.
- Harding, S. T.** Moisture equivalent of soils and moisture properties, 8: 303.
- Hardy, F.** "Suction forces" in colloidal soils, 24: 71.
- Harmer, P. M.** "Rawness" of some humid subsoils, 5: 393; Minnesota glacial soil studies: III, 23: 73; see **Alway, F. J.**
- Harper, H. J.** Determination of ammonia in soils, 18: 409; see **Thomas, R. P.**
- Harper, H. J.**, **Baker, W. G.**, **Boatman, B.**, and **Boatman, J. L.**, Utilization of phosphorus by corn, 24: 9.
- Harper, H. J.**, and **Jacobson, G. M.** Comparison of soil acidity tests, 18: 75.
- Harper, R. M.** Soil census of Alabama and West Florida, 4: 91.
- Harrington, E. L.** Soil temperatures in Saskatchewan, 25: 183.
- Harris, K.** See **Thomas, M. D.**
- Harris, W. G.** See **Ellet, W. B.**
- Hart, E. B.** See **Tottingham, W. E.**
- Hartman, C.**, and **Powers, W. L.** Crop-producing power of essential elements, 25: 371.
- Hartwell, B. L.**, and **Pember, F. R.** Unlike effect of acid soils on plants due to aluminum, 6: 259; effect of dicalcium silicate on acid soil, 10: 57.
- Hartwell, B. L.**, **Pember, F. R.**, and **Howard, L. P.** Lime requirements, 7: 279.
- Haselhoff, E.** Nitrogen exploitation in the soil (abst.), 20: 353.
- Haselhoff, E.**, and **Haun, F.** Nitrogen and ammonia contents of soil (abst.), 20: 353.
- Haselhoff, E.**, and **Liehr, O.** Organic fertilizers (abst.), 20: 353; carbon dioxide content of the soil air (abst.), 20: 361.
- Häsenbaumer, J.** See **König, J.**, and **Schäfer, J.**; **König, J.**, and **Kruger, E.**
- Haskell, S. B.** Availability of subsoil potash, 19: 105.
- Haun, F.** See **Haselhoff, E.**
- Hawker, H. W.** Soils of Hidalgo County, Texas, 23: 475.
- Haynes, J. D.** Improving permeability of alkali soil with sulfur, 25: 443; availability of sulfur fertilizers, 447.
- Healy, D. J.**, and **Karraker, P. E.** The Clark hydrogen-electrode vessel, 13: 323.
- Heck, A. F.** See **Whiting, A. L.**
- Heck, A. F.**, and **Whiting, A. L.** Assimilation of phosphorus by red clover, 24: 17.
- Helbig, M.** See **Knickmann, E.**
- Helbronner, A.** See **Rudolfs, W.**
- Helz, G. E.** See **Whiting, A. L.**, **Fred, E. B.**, and.
- Hendrickson, B. H.** Soil acidity related to soil types, 18: 383.
- Henrici, A. T.** See **Starkey, R. L.**
- Heukelekian, O.** See **Waksman, S. A.**
- Hibbard, P. L.** Changes in soil caused by manure, 7: 259; determination of sulfates, 8: 61; sulfur for neutralizing alkali soils, 11: 385; reclamation of infertile alkali soils, 13: 125; comparison of soil solution with soil extract, 16: 465; analysis of waters and soils, 25: 351.
- Higby, W. M.** Lysimeter studies, 24: 51.
- Hirst, C. T.**, and **Greaves, J. E.** Factors influencing determination of chlorides in soil, 9: 41; determination of sulfates in soil, 13: 231; influence of manure and irrigation water, 19: 87.
- Hirst, C. T.** See **Greaves, J. E.**; **Greaves, J. E.**, **Stewart, R.**, and; **Greaves, J. E.**, and **Lund, Y.**
- Hissink, D. J.** Adsorbed bases in the soil, 15: 269; studies on samples of soil and dredged mud (abst.), 17: 434; simple and quick method for determining soil acidity (abst.), 434: acidity and the rôle played by it in several processes (abst.), 435; saturation condition of the soil (abst.), 22: 214; mechanical soil analysis (abst.), 214; see **Brockmann, C.**
- Hissink, D. J.**, and **van der Spek, J.** The acidity of the soil (abst.), 17: 435.
- Hissink, D. J.**, and **Zylstra, K.** Causes of the poor appearance of some crops in Zeeland (abst.), 17: 434.



- Hitchcock, E. B. *See* Brown, P. E.
- Hoagland, D. R. H- and OH-ion concentration, 3: 547; absorption of ions by plants, 16: 225; soil fertility, 25: 45; *see* Sharp, L. T.; Dayhuff, W. C.
- Hoagland, D. R., and Christie, A. W. Effect of CaO and CaCO<sub>3</sub> on soil reaction, 5: 379.
- Hoagland, D. R., and Martin, J. C. Sand, solution, and soil cultures, 16: 367.
- Hock, A. *See* Nicklas, H.
- Holben, F. J. *See* White, J. W.; Haley, D. E.
- Holding, W. A. *See* MacIntire, W. H., Willis, L. G., and.
- Horner, J. *See* Stewart, G. R., Thomas, E. C., and.
- Howard, L. P. Relation of lime requirements to retention of ammonia, 6: 405; relation of certain acidic to basic constituents of soil, 8: 313; soil reaction as influenced by green manures, 9: 27; *see* Hartwell, B. L., Pember, F. R., and.
- Hudig, J. *See* Quanjer, H. M.
- Hudig, J., and Meyer, C. Acid and alkaline fertilizers (abst.), 17: 437.
- Humfeld, C. H. *See* Clark, N. A., and Alben, A. O.
- Hunnius, T. *See* Densch, A.; Densch, and Pfaff.
- Hurst, L. A. *See* Gillespie, L. J.
- Huston, H. G. The eightieth anniversary of Paul Wagner, 15: 67.
- I
- Isham, R. M. *See* Alway, F. J.
- Itano, A., and Ray, G. B. Method for counting soil protozoa, 5: 303.
- J
- Jacobson, G. M. *See* Harper, H. J.
- Jamison, L. A. *See* Peterson, W. H., Elvehjem, C. A., and.
- Jennings, D. S. Effect of colloidal substances on wheat, 7: 201; size distribution of soil material, 17: 469.
- Jennings, D. S., Thomas, M. D., and Gardner, W. A new method of mechanical analyses, 14: 485.
- Jenny, H. *See* Wiegner, G.
- Jensen, H. L. *Actinomyces acidophilus*, n. sp., 25: 225.
- Joffe, J. S. Hydrogen-ion concentration measurements of soils, 9: 261; influence of soil reaction on alfalfa, 10: 301; sulfur oxidation in sulfur-floats-soil mixtures, 13: 107; studies on isolation of sulfur-oxidizing bacteria, 161; acid phosphate production by Lipman process, I, moisture effects 14: 479; II, building up sulfur-floats mixtures, 15: 41; III, green-sand marl in sulfur-floats mixtures 93; *see* Lipman, J. G.; Lipman, J. G., Waksman, S. A., and.
- Joffe, J. S., and McLean, H. C. Oxidation of sulfur in Oregon soils, 14: 217; alkali soil investigations, I, colloidal phenomena, 17: 395; II, origin of alkali soil, 18: 13; III, chemical effects, 133; IV, chemical and biological effects, 237; colloidal behavior of soils: I, suction force, 20: 169; II, soil complex capable of base exchange, 21: 181; III, cation replacement, 23: 127.
- Johnson, H. W. Relation of H-ion concentration to lime requirement, 13: 7; new apparatus for mechanical analysis of soils, 16: 363; *see* Brown, P. E.
- Johnson, J. Influence of heated soils on germination and growth, 7: 1.
- Johnston, E. S. Nutrient requirement of the potato plant, 10: 389; the "six types" of nutrient solutions, 20: 397.
- Johnston, W. W. Effect of crop on sulfate production, 21: 233.
- Jones, C. P. Adsorption and absorption of bases by soils, 17: 255.
- Jones, D. H., and Murdoch, F. G. Bacterial analysis of soil samples, 8: 259.
- Jones, E. G. *See* Russel, J. C., and Bahrt, G. M.
- Jones, J. S. Hydrogen-ion concentration and lime requirement, 18: 65.
- Jones, J. S., and Reeder, J. C. Silica crucibles in potassium determination, 12: 419.
- Jones, L. H., and Shive, J. W. Influence of iron on the growth of wheat, 11: 93.
- Jones, M. M. *See* Duley, F. L.
- Jones, R. L., and Pember, F. R. Fertilizer nutrients required by barley, 19: 169.

- Joseph, A. F. Clays as soil colloids, 20: 89; determination of soil colloids 24: 271.

## K

- Kaim, H. *See* Lemmermann, O.
- Kappen, H. Significance of soil acidity (abst.), 20: 358.
- Kappen, H., and Belling, W. On the quinhydrone method (abst.), 22: 214.
- Kappen, H., and Bollenbeck, K. Kinds of soil acidity (abst.), 22: 215.
- Kappen, H., and Lukacs, M. Physiological reaction of chemical fertilizers (abst.), 22: 217.
- Karraker, P. E. Effect of initial moisture in soil on moisture movement, 10: 143; conference on elementary soil teaching, 247; a note on soil reaction studies, 15: 473; production of nodules on alfalfa plants, 24: 103; delayed effect of liming, 147; effect of rotations on yields of wheat, 247; variable occurrence of nitrates in soil, 259; *see* Healy, D. J.
- Karunaker, P. D. *See* Waksman, S. A.
- Katshinsky, G. A. Root system of grasses in podzol soils (abst.), 17: 429.
- Kearney, T. H. Absorption of sodium carbonate and sodium chloride, 9: 267.
- Keen, B. A. Soil mechanics and physics, 25: 9.
- Kelley, A. P. Plant, indicators of soil types, 13: 411; soil acidity, an ecological factor, 16: 41.
- Kelley, O. W. *See* Beaumont, A. B., Sessions, A. C., and.
- Kelley, W. P. Variability of alkali soil, 14: 177.
- Kelley, W. P., and Brown, S. M. Solubility of anions in alkali soils, 12: 261; base exchange in relation to alkali soils, 20: 477; ion exchange in relation of soil acidity, 21: 289.
- Kelley, W. P., and Cummins, A. B. Chemical effect of salts in soil, 11: 139.
- Kinney, E. J. *See* Buckner, G. D., Peter, A. N., and.
- Kirste, H. Growth of plants in acid soils (abst.), 22: 217.
- Knickmann, E. Soil acidity (abst.), 22: 215.
- Knickmann, E., and Helbig, M. Soil exhaustion (abst.), 22: 215.
- Koch, G. P. Enzyme activity of bacteria, 1: 179; field and laboratory experiments compared, 2: 87; studies on soil protozoa, 163; soil sterilization and soil solution, 3: 525; potassium requirements of bacteria, 5: 219.
- Koch, G. P., and Butler, J. R. Cross-inoculation of legumes, 6: 397.
- Koketsu, R. *See* Livingston, B. E.
- Komp, W. H. W. Use of carbon bisulfide against white grub, 10: 15.
- König, J., Häsenbaumer, J. and Krüger, E. Influence of crops and fertilizers on the soil acids (abst.), 20: 356.
- König, J., Häsenbaumer, J., and Schäfer, J. Relationship between the plant food present in the soil and the food taken from it by potatoes (abst.), 17: 432.
- Konno, J. *See* Miyake, K., Tamachi, I., and.
- Kopeloff, N. The inoculation and incubation of soil fungi, 1: 381; ammonification by soil fungi, 541; influence of limestone on crop yield, 4: 19; *see* Coleman, D. A., Lint, H. C., and.
- Kopeloff, N., and Coleman, D. A. Protozoa and sterilization, 3: 197.
- Kopp, A. New soil sampler, 25: 237.
- Kornev, B. G. Absorbing power of soils (abst.), 17: 428.
- Kozhevnikov, A. *See* Tulaikov, N.
- Krasiuk, A. A. Differentiation of podzol soils (abst.), 17: 429.
- Krasovskiy, I. Physiological activity of seminal and nodal roots, 21: 307.
- Krauss, G. Soil structure (abst.), 17: 430.
- Krüger, E., *See* König, J., Häsenbaumer, J., and.
- Krull, C. Investigations on carbonic acid (abst.), 22: 217.
- Kuhn, R. *See* Oppenheimer, C.
- Kuzmin, M. S. *See* Tulaikov, N. M.

## L

- Larson, H. W. E. Calcium ion required by alfalfa, 25: 399.
- Lathrop, E. C. Protein decomposition in soils, 1: 509; *see* Robbins, W. J.

- Latshaw, W. L. *See* Swanson, C. O.; Swanson, C. O., Gainey, P. L., and.
- Leach, B. R. Behavior of carbon disulfide in soil, 10: 421; hot-water treatment for Japanese beetle in soil, 12: 63.
- Leach, B. R., and Thomson, J. W. Soil treatment to control Japanese beetle larvae, 12: 43.
- Lebedev (Lebedeff), A. F. Moisture properties of soils (abst.), 17: 423; volume weight of soils, 25: 207.
- Lebedjantzev, A. N. Soil drying and fertility maintenance, 18: 419.
- LeClerc, E. L., and Smith, F. B. Fungi in some Colorado soils, 25: 433.
- Leidigh, A. H. *See* Reynolds, E. B.
- Lemmermann, O. "Fertilizing rye" (abst.), 17: 433.
- Lemmermann, O., and Fresenius, L. Behavior of lime in the soil (abst.), 20: 356; reaction of German soils (abst.), 357.
- Lemmermann, O., and Kaim, H. Carbon dioxide contents of the air above manured and unmanured soils (abst.), 20: 361.
- Lemmermann, O., and Wiessmann, H. Phosphorus requirements of arable soils (abst.), 20: 354; investigations on yield-increasing effect of silicic acid (abst.), 354; increase in crop yield due to silica (abst.), 22: 217.
- Leonard, L. T. Bacterial relations of soybean and cowpea, 15: 277; lack of nodule-formation in legume subfamily, 20: 165.
- Lichtenberg, J. F. Soil water level, capillarity and evaporation (abst.), 17: 438.
- Lichtenwalner, D. C., Flenner, A. L., and Gordon, N. E. Absorption by colloidal oxides of iron and aluminum, 15: 157.
- Liehr, O. *See* Haselhoff, E.
- Linford, L. B. Relation of light to soil moisture phenomena, 22: 233.
- Lint, H. C. *See* Lipman, J. G., McLean, H. C., and; Coleman, D. A., and Kopeloff, N.
- Lint, H. C., and Coleman, D. A. Error in soil analysis, 2: 157.
- Lipman, C. B. Humus nitrogen in arid soils, 1: 285; ferrous sulfate treatment of soil as influencing the soil solution obtained by the Lipman pressure method, 13: 55; *see* Gordon, A.
- Lipman, C. B., and Burgess, P. S. Ammonifiability vs. nitrifiability, 3: 63.
- Lipman, C. B., Davis, A. R., and West, E. S. Tolerance of plants for NaCl, 22: 303.
- Lipman, C. B., and Fowler, L. W. Effects of leaching on soil flora, 1: 291.
- Lipman, C. B., and Gericke, W. F. Availability of nitrogen, 2: 575; sulfur in sulfate of ammonia, 5: 81; effect of stable manure on alkali salts, 7: 105.
- Lipman, C. B., and Martin, D. E. Unusual precautions in taking soil samples, 6: 131.
- Lipman, C. B., and Teakle, L. J. H. Fixation of nitrogen by azotobacter, 19: 99.
- Lipman, C. B., and Waynick, D. D. Effects of climate on properties of soils, 1: 5.
- Lipman, C. B., and Wank, M. E. Availability of nitrogen in peat, 18: 311.
- Lipman, J. G. Introductory editorial, 1: 3; sulfur on alkali soils, 2: 205; adjusting the soil reaction to the crop, 7: 181; history of the International Society of Soil Science, 25: 3; organization and program of Soil Science Congress, 5.
- Lipman, J. G., and Blair, A. W. Protein content of soybeans, 1: 171; inoculation of soybeans, 579; yield and nitrogen content of soybeans, 4: 71; availability of nitrogen in nitrate of soda, 5: 291; effect of liming on crop yields, 6: 157; lime factor in permanent soil improvement, 9: 83; availability of nitrogenous fertilizers, 371; nitrogen losses under intensive cropping, 12: 1.
- Lipman, J. G., Blair, A. W., McLean, H. C., and Prince, A. L. Comparison of magnesian and non-magnesian limestone, 15: 307.
- Lipman, J. G., Blair, A. W., Martin, W. H., and Beckwith, C. S. Inoculation sulfur as a plant-food solvent, 11: 87.
- Lipman, J. G., Blair, A. W., and Prince, A. L. Availability of nitrogenous fertilizers, 19: 57.
- Lipman, J. G., and Joffe, J. S. Oxidation of sulfur and formation of phosphates, 10: 327.

- Lipman, J. G., and McLean, H. C.** Experiment on availability of treated phosphate, 4: 337; sulfur-phosphate compounds under field conditions, 5: 243.
- Lipman, J. G., McLean, H. C., and Lint, H. C.** Effect of sulfur oxidation on phosphates, 1: 533; sulfur oxidation in soils, 2: 499.
- Lipman, J. G., Prince, A. L., and Blair, A. W.** Influence of sulfur on soil, 12: 197.
- Lipman, J. G., Waksman, S. A., and Joffe, J. S.** Oxidation of sulfur by soil micro-organisms, 12: 475.
- Littauer, F.** Urea in the soil (abst.), 20: 354.
- Livingston, B. E., and Koketsu, R.** Water supplying power of soil and wilting of plants, 9: 469.
- Lochhead, A. G.** Bacterial types occurring in frozen soil, 21: 225.
- Lohmann, W.** See **Blanck, E.**
- Löhnis, F.** Nitrogen availability of green manures, 22: 253; effect of growing legumes upon succeeding crops, 355.
- Lomanitz, S.** Effect of NaCl on alfalfa in solution cultures, 16: 183; influence of sodium chloride on alfalfa, 18: 353; physiological balance study for alfalfa, 22: 97.
- Lukacs, M.** See **Kappen, H.**
- Lund, Y.** See **Greaves, J. E.**; **Greaves, J. E., Carter, E. G., and Greaves, J. E., Hirst, C. T., and.**
- Lundegardh, H.** Carbon dioxide evolution of soil and crop, 23: 417.
- Lunt, H. A.** See **English, D. T.**
- Lutz, R. P.** See **Anderegg, F. O.**
- Lyon, T. L., Bizzel, J. A., and Wilson, B. D.** Formation of nitrates in soil, 9: 53.
- M**
- McBeth, I. G.** The decomposition of cellulose in soils, 1: 437.
- McCall, A. G.** Balance of nutrient solutions, 2: 207; the transcontinental excursion, 25: 105.
- McCall, A. G., and Haag, J. R.** Hydrogen-ion concentration of three-salt solutions, 10: 481; relation of H-ion concentration to growth and chlorosis, 12: 69.
- McCall, A. G., Norton, J. B. S., and Richards, P. E.** Stem growth of soybeans in sand cultures, 6: 479.
- MacCarthy, G. R.** Soluble iron as related to colloids, 20: 473.
- McClure, G. M.** See **Bear, F. E.**
- McCool, M. M.** See **Bouyoucos, G.**
- McCool, M. M., and Millar, C. E.** Freezing-point lowerings, 3: 113; freezing-point lowering of soils and plants, 9: 217; soluble substances in soils from different regions, 10: 219.
- McCool, M. M., and Romaine, J. D.** Some soil and plant relationships, 22: 31.
- McCool, M. M., Veatch, J. O., and Spurway, C. H.** Soil profile studies in Michigan, 16: 95.
- McCool, M. M., and Weidemann, A. G.** A study of organic soil profiles, 18: 117; further studies on soil profiles, 181; some moisture relationships of soils, 20: 243.
- McCool, M. M., Weidemann, A. G., and Schlubatis, G.** Michigan soil profiles, 23: 391.
- McCool, M. M., and Wheeting, L. C.** Formation of soluble substances in organic soils, 11: 233; influence of removal of colloids, 18: 99.
- McCrory, S. H.** See **Girsberger, J.**
- McDole, G. R.** See **Alway, F. J.**; **Alway, F. J., and Rost, C. O.**; **Neidig, R. E., and Magnuson, H. P.**
- McGeorge, W. T.** Acidity of highly basic soils, 16: 195; chlorosis of pineapple plants grown on manganiferous soils, 269; the value of soil analysis, 17: 457; availability of phosphorus, 463; soil solution of Hawaiian soils, 18: 1.
- McGuinn, A. F.** Action of dicyandiamid and guanlyl urea sulfate, 17: 487.
- McHargue, J. S.** Supports for plants in pot or water cultures, 16: 359.
- MacIntire, W. H.** Carbonation of burnt lime in soils, 7: 325; liberation of native soil potassium, 8: 337; effect of calcium and magnesium on soil leaching; I, 21: 377; II, 22: 21; outgo of calcium, magnesium, nitrates, and sulfates, 23: 175; fractional incorporations of burnt lime in soil, 24: 475.

- MacIntire, W. H.**, Gray, F. J., and Shaw, W. M. Non-biological oxidation of sulfur, 11: 249.
- MacIntire, W. H.**, and Mooers, C. A. A pitless lysimeter equipment, 11: 207.
- MacIntire, W. H.**, and Shaw, W. M. The system  $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2\text{-CaSO}_4\text{-H}_2\text{O}$  in soil suspensions, 17: 65; retention of sulfate by heavily limed soil, 19: 125; effect of incorporation zone on carbonate disintegration, 20: 403; fixation of calcium-magnesium from burnt limes, 22: 109.
- MacIntire, W. H.**, Shaw, W. M., and Crawford, E. M. Organic matter changes in two soil zones, 23: 107.
- MacIntire, W. H.**, Shaw, W. M., and Young, J. B. Effect of calcic and magnesian additions on sulfate outgo, 16: 1; sulfate losses as influenced by lime and magnesia, 159; liberation of soil potassium, 217; soil and subsoil in calcium-magnesium interchange, 321; reciprocal repression exerted by lime and magnesia, 449; silica and magnesia-induced toxicity, 19: 331.
- MacIntire, W. H.**, Willis, L. G., and Holding, W. A. Effects of lime and magnesia upon soil sulfur, 4: 231.
- MacIntire, W. H.**, and Young, J. B. Analysis of rainfall in Tennessee, 15: 205; transient nature of magnesium-induced toxicity, 427; lime and magnesia-influence of nitrate leachings, 19: 309.
- McLean, F. T.** See **Gilbert, B. E.**, and **Hardin, L. J.**
- McLean, F. T.**, and **Gilbert, B. E.** Aluminum tolerance of crop plants, 24: 163.
- McLean, H. C.** The oxidation of sulfur by microorganisms, 5: 251; see **Lipman, J. G.**; **Blair, A. W.**; **Lipman, J. G.**, and **Lint, H. C.**; **Joffe, J. S.**; **Lipman, J. G.**, **Blair, A. W.**, and **Prince, A. L.**
- McMiller, P. R.** Unproductivity of "raw" subsoils in humid regions, 7: 233; concentration of carbonates, 22: 75.
- McRuer, W. G.** See **Russel, J. C.**
- MacTaggart, A.** Influence of fertilizers on nitrogen content of legumes, 11: 435.
- Mack, W. B.**, and **Haley, D. E.** Effect of potassium on nitrogen availability, 25: 333.
- Magistad, O. C.** Aluminum content of soil solution, 20: 181.
- Magnuson, H. P.** See **Neldig, R. E.**, **McDole, G. R.**, and **Neldig, R. E.**; **Gibbs, W. M.**, **Batchelor H. W.**, and.
- Makrinoff, I. A.** Bacterial soil preparations, 17: 19; bacterial soil preparations for non-legume crops, 31.
- Marais, J. S.** Agricultural value of insoluble mineral phosphates, 13: 355.
- Marbut, C. F.** Classification, nomenclature, and mapping of soils, 25: 51; American point of view of soil classification, 61.
- Marcilla, J.** Nature of lime in the soil (abst.), 19: 39.
- Marsh, F. W.** Apparatus for measuring carbon dioxide, 25: 253.
- Martin, D. E.** See **Lipman, C. B.**
- Martin, J. C.** See **Christie, A. W.**; **Hoagland, D. R.**; **Burd, J. S.**
- Martin, T. L.** Soil flora studies, 16: 475; effect of straw on nitrates and crop growth, 20: 159; decomposition of alfalfa and sweet clover, 24: 309.
- Martin, W. H.** Relation of sulfur to soil acidity, 9: 393; inoculated vs. uninoculated sulfur, 11: 75; influence of soil moisture and acidity on potato scab, 16: 69; see **Lipman, J. G.**, **Blair, A. W.**, and **Beckwith, C. S.**
- Maschhaupt, J. G.** Influence of soil type and fertilization on the nitrogen (abst.), 17: 438.
- Massey, A. B.** See **Robbins, W. J.**
- Mather, W.** Effect of lime on composition of soil, 13: 337.
- Mattson, S.** Behavior of aluminosilicates, 25: 289; action of neutral salts on acid soils, 345;  $\text{CaCO}_3$  soil equilibrium and lime requirement, 431.
- Maxton, J. L.** Effect of fertilizers on seed germination, 23: 335.
- Meacham, M. R.** See **Truog, E.**
- Meler, H. F.**, and **Halstead, C. E.** H-ion concentration in a three-salt solution, 11: 325.
- Metzger, W. H.** Effect of plants on solubility of soil nutrients, 25: 273.
- Mevius, W.** H-ion concentration in culture mediums (abst.), 22: 217.
- Meyer, C.** See **Hudig, J.**

- Middleton, H. E.** Moisture equivalent and mechanical analyses of soils, 9: 159.
- Millar, C. E.** Soluble material in cropped and virgin soils, 7: 253; soluble salt content of field soils, 13: 433; studies on virgin and depleted soils, 16: 433; availability of nutrients in subsoils, 19: 275; removal of nutrients from subsoil by alfalfa, 23: 261; *see* McCool, M. M.
- Miller, E. J., and Robinson, C. S.** Acid amide fraction of plant nitrogen, 11: 457.
- Miller, R. W.** *See* Swanson, C. O.
- Minges, G. A.** *See* Brown, P. E.
- Mirasol, J. J.** Aluminum as a factor in soil acidity, 10: 153.
- Mitscherlich, E. A.** Pot experiments and fertilizer practices (abst.), 17: 432; determination of fertilizer requirements of the soil (abst.), 20: 361; strain and variety experiment (abst.), 22: 217; plant physiological investigations on soil acidity (abst.), 218; CO<sub>2</sub> as fertilizer (abst.), 218; fertilizer requirements of the soil (abst.), 218.
- Miyake, K.** Ammonification and nitrification, 2: 481; absorption of ammonium ion by soil, 583; the nature of ammonification, 4: 321.
- Miyake, K., Tamachi, I., and Konno, J.** Influence of various salts on acid soils, 18: 279.
- Mooers, C. A.** Abnormality of soils in cylinder experiments, 7: 247; *see* MacIntire, W. H.
- Morgan, F. J.** The soil solution, 3: 531.
- Morgan, M. F., and Salter, R. M.** Solubility and physical properties of limestones, 15: 293.
- Morison, C. G. T.** *See* Doyne, H. C.
- Morris, V. H.** Effect of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, 18: 87.
- Morrow, C. A., and Fetzer, W. R.** Nitrogen distribution of fibrin, 5: 163.
- Morrow, C. A., and Gortner, R. A.** Organic matter of soil: V, 3: 297.
- Morse, F. W.** Calcium carbonate, fertilizers and soil solution, 15: 75; comparative effects of KCl and K<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> on the soil, 16: 107; effect of fertilizers on leaching of CaCO<sub>3</sub>, 17: 249.
- Morse, W. J.** *See* Neller, J. R.
- Moyer, T. D., and Harris, K.** Moisture equivalent of soils, 21: 411.
- Mudge, C. S.** Iron depositing bacteria and hard-pan formation, 23: 467.
- Münter, Influence of alkaline soil reaction on production (abst.), 17: 432.**
- Murdoch, F. G.** *See* Jones, D. H.
- Murray, J. A.** The available state, 17: 359.
- Murray, T. J.** Effect of straw on biological soil processes, 12: 233.

## N

- Neave, S. L.,** *See* Buswell, A. M.
- Neidig, R. E.** *See* Gibbs, W. M., and Batchelor, H. W.; Bollen, W. B.
- Neidig, R. E., McDole, G. R., and Magnuson, H. P.** Effect of sulfur, calcium and phosphorus on alfalfa, 16: 127.
- Neidig, R. E., and Magnuson, H. P.** Carbonates and bicarbonates in Idaho soils, 16: 295; alkali studies: I, tolerance of wheat, 18: 449; II, tolerance of alfalfa, 19: 115; III, tolerance of barley, 20: 367; IV, tolerance of oats, 425.
- Neidig, R. E., and Snyder, R. S.** Effect of moisture and available nitrogen on wheat, 18: 173.
- Neller, J. R.** Soil sampler for bacteriological purposes, 4: 109; carbon-dioxide and ammonia production, 5: 225; activity of spores of soil bacteria, 9: 329; oxidizing power of soil from limed and unlimed plots, 10: 29; influence of growing plants upon oxidation in soil, 13: 139.
- Neller, J. R., and Morse, W. J.** Effect of borax on potatoes, corn, and beans, 12: 79.
- Nelson, D. H.** *See* Greaves, J. E.
- Newton, G. A., and Daniloff, K. B.** Effect of manures on plant growth, 24: 95.
- Newton, J. D.** Absorption of inorganic elements and buffer systems, 15: 181.
- Nicklas, H., and Hock, A.** Exchange acidity in soils (abst.), 22: 215.
- Noll, C. F.** *See* Skinner, J. J.
- Nolte, O., and Sander, E.** On the influence of salt solutions on the soil (abst.), 20: 359.
- Norton, J. B. S.** *See* McCall, A. G., and Richards, P. E.



- Noyes, H. A., and Cromer, C. O. Tests for legume inoculation, 6: 69.
- Noyes, H. A., and Yoder, L. Carbonic acid gas in relation to soil acidity, 5: 151.
- O
- O'Neal, A. M. Effect of moisture on soil color, 16: 275.
- Odén, S. Size distribution of particles in soils, 19: 1.
- Oppenheimer, C., and Kuhn, R. Lehrbuch der Enzyme, Chemie, physikalische Chemie und Biologie (book review), 24: 77.
- Osugi, S. See Rice, F. E.
- P
- Parker, F. W. Concentration and composition of soil solution, 12: 209; the classification of soil moisture, 13: 43; relation of CO<sub>2</sub> production to plant feeding power, 17: 229; CO<sub>2</sub> and plant absorption of inorganic elements, 20: 39; absorption of phosphate by filters, 149; soil phosphorus studies: III, 24: 129; see Tidmore, J. W.; Pierre, W. H.
- Parker, F. W., and Bryan, O. C. Soil acidity and hydrolysis of ethyl acetate, 15: 99.
- Parker, F. W., and Fudge, J. F. Soil phosphorus studies: I, 24: 109.
- Parker, F. W., and Pierre, W. H. Mineral elements in culture medium, 25: 337.
- Parker, F. W., and Tidmore, J. W. Modified Truog test, 16: 75; influence of lime phosphatic fertilizers, 21: 425.
- Parker, F. W., and Truog, E. Calcium and nitrogen content of plants, 10: 49.
- Parmelee, H. B. See Peterson, W. H., and Fred, E. B.
- Pate, W. W. Influence of replaceable base upon heat of wetting, 20: 329.
- Paterno, E. Potash salts from leucite (abst.), 19: 42.
- Pember, F. R. See Hartwell, B. L.; Hartwell, B. L., and Howard, L. P.; Jones, R. L.
- Perkins, A. T. On the nodulation of soybeans; effect of fertilizers 17: 439; nodulation of soybeans; a note on 449.
- Perotti, R., and Aureli, F. Ammonifying power of agricultural soils (abst.), 19: 84.
- Perotti, R., and Grandis, G. Determination of nitrifying power of agricultural soils (abst.), 19: 81.
- Perotti, R., and Zaffato, G. Root bacilli of *Calendula officinalis* L. (abst.), 19: 43.
- Peter, A. M. Phosphorus in bluegrass soil, 2: 387; see Buckner, G. D., and Kinney, E. J.
- Peterson, A. Soil fumigation with para-dichlorobenzene, 11: 305.
- Peterson, W. H. See Stewart, R.; Schmidt, E. G., and Fred, E. B.; Anderson, J. A., and Fred, E. B.
- Peterson, W. H., Elvehjem, C. A., and Jamison, L. A. Mineral content of cabbage and sauerkraut, 20: 451.
- Peterson, W. H., Parmelee, H. B., and Fred, E. B. Factors which influence cabbage composition, 24: 299.
- Pfaff. See Densch, Hunnius, and.
- Pierre, W. H. Soil acidity, CO<sub>2</sub>, and soil-water ratio, 20: 285; see Parker, F. W.
- Pierre, W. H., and Parker, F. W. Collodion sacks for obtaining soil extracts, 23: 13; soil phosphorus studies: II, 24: 119.
- Pinckey, R. M. Sorghum as an indicator of soil-nitrogen, 17: 315.
- Popoff, M. Fertilizing, fertilizers, and cell stimulation (abst.), 20: 361.
- Post, A. H. Soil variability, 17: 343.
- Potter, R. S. See Snyder, R. S.
- Potter, R. S., and Benton, T. H. Organic phosphorus, 2: 291.
- Potter, R. S., and Snyder, R. S. Carbon and nitrogen changes in soil, 1: 76; effect of heat on nitrogenous constituents of soil, 5: 197; production of carbon dioxide by molds, 359; organic phosphorus of soil, 6: 321.
- Powell, E. B. Soil colloids as simple suspension, 19: 407; a new soil core sampler, 21: 53.
- Powers, W. L. Moisture capacity and wilting point, 14: 159; increasing the duty of water, 377; colloidal fraction of soils, 23: 487; hydrogen-ion concentration and plant growth, 24: 1; see Stephenson, R. E.; Hartman, C.
- Pratolongo, U. Reaction of Italian soils (abst.), 19: 83.
- Prilanischnikov, D. N. Physiological character of ammonium nitrate (abst.), 22: 218.

- Prianishnikov, D. N.**, and Domontovitch, M. K. Problem of a proper nutrient medium, 21: 327.
- Prince, A. L.** Variability of nitrates and total nitrogen, 15: 395; *see* **Blair, A. W.**; **Lipman, J. G.**, and **Blair, A. W.**; **Lipman, J. G.**, **Blair, A. W.**, **McLean, H. C.**, and; **Lipman, J. G.**, **Blair, A. W.**, and.
- Prince, A. L.**, and **Winsor, H. W.** Nitrogen availability in garbage tankage and in urea, 21: 59.
- Pulling, H. E.** Rate of water movement in aerated soils, 4: 239.
- Q**
- Qaunjer, H. M.**, and **Hudig, J.** Potato scab in its relation to climate and soil (abst.), 17: 438.
- R**
- Raether, A.** Laws of the capillary rise of soil water (abst.), 20: 358.
- Ramann, E.** Influences of quick lime and calcium carbonate, 18: 387; chemico-physical actions of quicklime and limestone (abst.), 20: 356.
- Ray, G. B.** *See* **Itano, A.**
- Read, J. W.** Organic carbon-nitrogen ratio in soils, 12: 491.
- Read, J. W.**, and **Ridgell, R. H.** Use of conventional carbon factor, 13: 1.
- Reeder, J. C.** *See* **Jones, J. S.**
- Reid, F. R.** *See* **Skinner, J. J.**
- Reinau, E.** Carbon dioxide of atmosphere and of soil (abst.), 20: 359; carbon dioxide as a climatological growth factor (abst.), 359; contribution to soil carbon dioxide (abst.), 360; growth factors in fertilizing with carbon dioxide (abst.), 360; carbonic acid from soils and from the atmosphere (abst.), 22: 218.
- Renner, W.** Influence of various fertilizers (abst.), 22: 215.
- Reynolds, E. B.**, and **Leidigh, A. H.** Sulfur as fertilizer for cotton, 14: 435.
- Rice, F. E.**, and **Osugi, S.** Inversion of cane sugar by soils, 5: 333.
- Richards, P. E.** *See* **McCall, A. G.**, **Norton, J. B. S.**, and.
- Richmond, T. E.** Extraction of ammonia from soil, 5: 481; *see* **Ames, J. W.**; **Whitting, A. L.**
- Ridgell, R. H.** *See* **Read, J. W.**
- Rippel, A.** Hydrogen-ion concentration for soil microorganisms (abst.), 20: 358.
- Robbins, W. J.**, and **Lathrop, E. C.** Oxidation of vanillic acid, 7: 475.
- Robbins, W. J.**, and **Massey, A. B.** Destruction of vanillin by a soil bacterium, 10: 237.
- Robinson, C. S.** The determination of carbon dioxide, 10: 41; *see* **Miller, E. J.**
- Robinson, R. H.** Effect of heat on soil reaction, 9: 151; acid soil studies: I, 11: 353.
- Robinson, R. H.**, and **Bullis, D. E.** Acid soil studies: II, 11: 363; III, 13: 449.
- Roller, E. M.** *See* **Clark, N. A.**
- Romaine, J. D.** *See* **McCool, M. M.**
- Rossi, G.** Importance of malaria to agriculture, 5: 323; note on microbiology of soil, 12: 409.
- Rost, C. O.** Determination of soil phosphorus, 4: 295; sulfides in Minnesota peat soils, 14: 167; *see* **Alway, F. J.**; **Alway, F. J.**, **McDole, G. R.**, and.
- Rost, C. O.**, and **Alway, F. J.** Minnesota glacial soil studies: I, 11: 161.
- Rost, C. O.**, and **Clapp, F. C.** Lime and phosphoric acid in peat, 5: 213.
- Rost, C. O.**, and **Fieger, E.** Hydrogen-ion concentration of stored soil samples, 16: 121.
- Roszmann, C. A.** Retention of phosphorus by soil colloids, 24: 465.
- Roviera, P.** Rehmsdor's nitrogenous fertilizer (abst.), 19: 81.
- Rudolfs, W.** Influence of sodium chloride on trees, 8: 397; effect of salt and sulfur on live stumps, 9: 181; effect of salt solutions on absorption by seeds, 11: 277; experiments with common rock salt: I 12: 449; II, 457; III, 471; sulfur oxidation in "black alkali" soils, 13: 215; composting rock phosphate with sulfur, 14: 37; oxidation of iron pyrites by sulfur organisms, 135; sulfur oxidation, 247; sulfur oxidation in greensand mixtures, 307; effect of water and salt solution of seeds, 20: 15; selective absorption of ions by seeds, 249.
- Rudolfs, W.**, and **Helbronner, A.** Oxidation of zinc sulfide by microorganisms, 14: 459.



- Ruhnau, G.** Behavior of the soil to water (abst.), 17: 430.
- Runk, C. R.** Degrees of fineness of limestone, 19: 267.
- Russel, J. C., and Burr, W. W.** Studies of moisture equivalent of soils, 19: 251.
- Russel, J. C., Jones, E. G., and Bahrt, G. M.** Temperature and moisture factors in nitrate production, 19: 381.
- Russel, J. C., and McRuer, W. G.** Organic matter and nitrogen content, 24: 421.
- Russel, E. J.** Plant nutrition and crop production (book review), 23: 249.
- S**
- Sack, J.** See **Gerretsen, F. C.**, **Gryns, A.**, and **Söhngen, N. L.**
- Saint, S. J.** See **Comber, N. M.**
- Salter, R. M.** See **Morgan, M. F.**
- Sander, See Gering; Nolte, O.**
- Sandon, H.** The composition and distribution of the protozoan fauna of the soil (book review), 23: 415; protozoa of some American soils, 25: 107.
- Scanlan, R. W.** Calcium in soybean inoculation, 25: 313.
- Schäfer, J.** See **König, J.**, **Häsenbaumer, J.**, and.
- Scheffer, F.** Transformation of burned lime in the soil (abst.), 22: 215.
- Schlubatis, G.** See **McCool, M. M.**, **Weidemann, A. G.**, and.
- Schmidt, D.** Relation of seed weight to growth in culture solution, 15: 285.
- Schmidt, E. G., Peterson, W. H., and Fred, E. B.** Destruction of pentosans by microorganisms, 15: 479.
- Schollenberger, C. J.** Lime-requirement methods, 3: 279; organic phosphorus of soil, 6: 365; organic phosphorus content of Ohio soils, 10: 127; reaction of lime materials with soils, 11: 261; silica and silicates in plants, 14: 347; determining soil organic matter, 24: 65; manganese as an active base, 25: 357; see **Ames, J. W.**; **Simon, R. H.**
- Schoonover, W. R.** See **Whiting, A. L.**
- Schuckenberg, A.** Plant injuries on acid soils (abst.), 20: 357.
- Schülke, G.** See **Gehring, A.**
- Scurti, F.** Natural zeolites (abst.), 19: 39.
- Sears, O. H.** See **Conner, S. D.**
- Sears, O. H., and Carroll, W. R.** Cowpea and soybean nodule bacteria, 24: 413.
- Sessions, A. C.** See **Beaumont, A. B.**, and **Kelley, O. W.**
- Sharp, L. T., and Hoagland, D. R.** Recent work concerning acid soils, 7: 197.
- Sharp, L. T., and Waynick, D. D.** Moisture equivalent determination of salt-treated soils, 4: 463.
- Shaw, C. F.** Two unusual colloidal soils, 20: 419; normal moisture capacity of soils, 23: 303.
- Shaw, W. M.** See **Gortner, R. A.**; **MacIntire, W. H.**, **Gray, F. J.**, and; **MacIntire, W. H.**, and **Young, J. B.**; **MacIntire, W. H.**; **MacIntire, W. H.**, and **Crawford E. M.**
- Shedd, O. M.** The estimation of total calcium in soils 10: 1; a test for easily soluble phosphate in soil, 11: 111; effect of certain calcium compounds on yield, 14: 233; effect of certain factors on acid digestion of soil, 15: 383; influence of sulfur and gypsum on potassium, 22: 335.
- Shibuya, K.** The laterite soils of Formosa island, 13: 425.
- Shive, J. W.** Influence of salts on the growth of soybeans, 1: 163; toxicity of phosphates toward soybeans, 5: 87; salt requirements for buckwheat in sand cultures, 6: 1; influence of sand upon a nutrient solution, 9: 169; soil moisture and salt relation, 14: 391; metabolism in the soybean plant, 22: 175; see **Jones, L. H.**; **Barnett, R. M.**; **Allison, V. de'Sigmond, A. A. J.** Alkali soils in Hungary, 18: 379; theory of origin of alkali soils, 21: 455; soil chemistry, 25: 23.
- Simon, R. H., and Schollenberger, C. J.** Acetone method of extracting sulfur from soil, 20: 393; rate of oxidation of elemental sulfur, 443.
- Singh, T. M.** Toxicity of "alkali" salts, 6: 463; effect of gypsum on soil bacteria, 9: 437.
- Skeen, J. R.** Hardpan formation in acid clay soils, 20: 307; effect of some electrolytes on kaolin, 23: 225.

- Skinner, C. E.** Inoculation of soil with protozoa and fungi, 24: 149; fixation of nitrogen by *Bacterium aerogenes*, 25: 195.
- Skinner, J. J., and Beattie, J. H.** Action of carbon black, 2: 93.
- Skinner, J. J., and Noll, C. F.** Influence of fertilizers on pasture, 7: 161.
- Skinner, J. J., and Reid, F. R.** Nutrient requirements of clover and wheat, 12: 287.
- Smith, A.** Moisture equivalent of soils, 4: 471; soil and atmosphere temperatures, 22: 447; effect of soil on climate, 23: 363; *see Wadsworth, H. A.*
- Smith, A. M.** Factors influencing nitrogen efficiency, 23: 137.
- Smith, E. S.** *See Stewart, J.*
- Smith, F. B.** *See LeClerg, E. L.*
- Smith, W.** Carbonic acid as a stimulant and as a building material (abst.), 22: 218.
- Snow, L. M.** Bacterial flora of wind-blown soil, 21: 143; Atlantic coast sand dunes, Sandwich, Massachusetts, 24: 39; Lake Michigan sand dunes, Indiana, 335.
- Snyder, R. S.** Determination of total nitrogen in certain soils, 6: 487; *see Potter, R. S.; Neldig, R. E.*
- Snyder, R. S., and Potter, R. S.** Soluble non-protein nitrogen of soil, 6: 441.
- Söhngen, N. L.** *See Gerretsen, F. C., Gryn, A., Sack, J., and.*
- Spek, van der, J.** Solutions of neutral salts on soil (abst.), 17: 436; *see Hissink, D. J.*
- Spencer, M. L.** Données Numériques de Cristallographie et de Minéralogie (book review), 23: 333.
- Spigatis, P.** Carbon dioxide and yields (abst.), 17: 433.
- Spokes, P. S.** Preliminary profile studies of certain forest soils, 19: 45.
- Spurway, C. H.** Solubility of phosphorus in soil, 19: 399; *see McCool, M. M., Veatch, J. O., and.*
- Spurway, C. H., and Austin, R. H.** Effects of neutral salts on soil reaction, 21: 71.
- Stallings, J. H.** Legume nitrogen assimilated by non-legumes, 21: 253; *see Brown, P. E.*
- Starkey, E. B.** *See Gordon, N. E.*
- Starkey, E. B., and Gordon, N. E.** Effect of reaction on adsorption by colloids, 14: 449.
- Starkey, R. L.** Decomposition of organic matter, 17: 293; *see Waksman, S. A.*
- Starkey, R. L., and Halvorson, H. O.** Transformations of iron in nature: II, 24: 381.
- Starkey, R. L., and Henrici, A. T.** Occurrence of yeasts in soil, 23: 33.
- Stauffer, L. H.** Measurement of physical characteristics of soils, 24: 373.
- Steenkamp, J. L.** Soil dehydration and colloid content: I, 25: 163; II, 239; III, 327.
- Stephenson, R. E.** Soil acidity methods, 6: 33; effect of organic matter on soil reaction, 413; activity of soil acids, 8: 41; soil acidity and bacterial activity, 12: 133; effect of organic matter on soil reaction: II, 145; fineness of grinding and rate of sulfur oxidation, 21: 489; replaceable bases in some Oregon soils, 24: 57.
- Stephenson, R. E., and Powers, W. L.** Sulfur oxidation and solubility of minerals, 18: 317.
- Stevens, J. W.** Study of various strains of *Bacillus radicola*, 20: 45.
- Stewart, G. R.** Effect of continuous cropping on soil nutrients, 11: 321.
- Stewart, G. R., Thomas, E. C., and Horner, J.** Growth of pineapple plants with nitrogen, 20: 227; effects of mulching paper on Hawaiian soils, 22: 35.
- Stewart, H. W.** Supply of moisture in sandy soils, 21: 197; effect of soil texture on moisture supply, 24: 231.
- Stewart, J.** Relation of arsenic to plant growth, 14: 111.
- Stewart, J., and Smith, E. S.** Relation of arsenic to plant growth, 14: 119.
- Stewart, R.** *See Greaves, J. E., and Hirst, C. T.*
- Stewart, R., and Peterson, W.** Nitric nitrogen in rock, 2: 345.
- Stewart, R., and Wyatt, F. A.** Value of various forms of limestone, 7: 273.
- Stoklasa, J., and Doerell, E. G.** Handbuch der biophysikalischen und biochemischen Durchforschung (book review), 22: 391.

- Stremme, H.** Grundzüge der praktischen Bodenkunde (book review), 23: 493; international soil map of Europe, 25: 73.
- Strowd, W. H.** Determination of nitrates and nitrites in plants, 10: 333; relation of nitrites to nodule production, 343; forms of nitrogen in soybean nodules, 11: 123.
- Swanson, C. O.,** Gainey, P. L., and Latshaw, W. L. Relation of calcium in soil to absolute reaction, 17: 181.
- Swanson, C. O.,** and Latshaw, W. L. Effect of alfalfa on the fertility elements of soil, 8: 1; sulfur as fertility element, 14: 421.
- Swanson, C. O.,** and Miller, R. W. Sulfur in Kansas soils, 3: 139.
- Sykora, J.** See **Truog, E.**
- T**
- Tacke, B.** See **Brine, F.**
- Tamachi, I.** See **Miyake, K.,** and Konno, J.
- Teakle, L. J. H.** Phosphate in soil solution, 25: 143; see **Lipman, C. B.**
- Tenney, F. G.** See **Waksman, S. A.**
- Thomas, E. C.** See **Stewart, G. R.,** and Horner, J.
- Thomas, M. D.** Aqueous vapor pressure of soils, 11: 409; II, 17: 1; replaceable bases in soils, 25: 379; aqueous vapor pressure of soils: III, 409; replaceable bases and soil dispersion, 419; aqueous vapor pressure of soils: IV, 485; see **Jennings, D. S.,** and Gardner, W.
- Thomas, M. D.,** and Harris, K. Moisture equivalent of soils, 21: 411.
- Thomas, R. P.,** and Harper, H. J. Use of oat straw in soil fertility, 21: 393.
- Thomas, W.** Minerals in Hagerstown silty clay loam soil, 15: 1.
- Thompson, J. W.** See **Leach, B. R.**
- Thorne, C. E.** Carriers of nitrogen in fertilizers, 9: 487.
- Thornton, H. G.,** and Fisher, R. A. Daily changes in bacterial numbers in soil, 23: 253.
- Tidmore, J. W.** See **Parker, F. W.**
- Tidmore, J. W.,** and Parker, F. W. Methods of studying strength of soil acids, 18: 331.
- Titta, G.** See **Ferrara, A.**
- Tottingham, W. E.,** and Hart, E. B. Sulfur in relation to plant nutrition, 11: 49.
- Tressler, D. K.** Solubility of soil potash in salt solutions, 6: 237.
- Truesdell, H. W.** Effect of phosphorus on alfalfa, 3: 77.
- Truog, E.** Soil acidity: I. Relation to growth of plants, 5: 169; general exhibits of Soil Science Congress, 25: 89; see **Parker, F. W.**
- Truog, E.,** and Meacham, M. R. Soil acidity: II. Relation to acidity of plant juice, 7: 469.
- Truog, E.,** and Sykora, J. Inhibition of plant toxins, 3: 333.
- Tulaikov, N. M.** The soil solution, 15: 229; utilization of soil moisture by plants, 21: 75.
- Tulaikov, N.,** and Kozhevnikov, A. Absorption of rain water during vegetation, 25: 213.
- Tulaikov, N. M.,** and Kuzmin, M. S. Obtaining the soil solutions, 15: 235.
- Turner, T. W.** Effect of nitrogen on flax-top-root ratio, 21: 303.
- U**
- Uhland, R. E.** See **Albrecht, W. A.**
- Upson, F. W.,** Calvin, J. W., and Brother, G. H. Loess soils of Nebraska, 2: 377.
- Uschidraweits, H.** Stimulation experiments (abst.), 22: 219.
- V**
- Van Alstine, E.** The movement of plant-food within the soil, 6: 281; determination of hydrogen-ion concentration, 10: 467; calcined phosphatic limestone as fertilizer, 14: 265.
- Van Wijk, D. J. R.** Determination of nitrates in soil, 17: 163.
- Vandecaveye, S. C.** Potassium from feldspars and soils, 16: 389; replacement of soil potassium, 17: 91; effect of climate conditions on *R. leguminosarum*, 23: 355.
- Veatch, C. H.** See **McCool, M. M.,** and Spurway, C. H.

- Veihmeyer, F. J.**, and Givan, C. V. Speed controller for moisture-equivalent centrifuge, 25: 455.
- Vilensky, D. G.** Origin of alkali soils (abst.), 17: 426; amelioration of salinized soils (abst.), 427.
- Viljoen, J. A.**, and Fred, E. B. Wood and plant growth, 17: 199.
- Vogel, J. C.** See **Hall, T. D.**
- W**
- Wadsworth, H. A.**, and Smith, A. Effect of size of column on capillary rise, 22: 199.
- Wagner, H.** Relation of plant growth to physical chemistry (abst.), 22: 219.
- Waksman, S. A.** Studies on soil protozoa, 1: 135; bacterial numbers in soils, 363; soil fungi and their activities, 2: 103; effect of protozoa on bacteria, 363; fungus flora of soil, 3: 565; importance of mold action in the soil, 6: 137; cultural studies of species of actinomycetes, 8: 71; oxidation of sulfur in the soil, 13: 329; soil reaction and growth of actinomycetes, 14: 61; microbiological analyses as index of soil fertility, 81; growth of fungi in the soil, 153; methods of study of numbers of soil microorganisms, 283; effect of fertilization on numbers of microorganisms, 321; ammonia accumulation in soil, 15: 49; methods for study of nitrification, 241; nitrification and soil fertility, 16: 55; soil microbiology in 1924, 19: 201; origin and nature of soil "humus": I, 22: 123; method of determining humus in the soil; II, 221; the nature of the substances contributing to the formation of humus: III, 323; the rôle of microorganisms in the formation of "humus": V, 421; Principles of soil microbiology (book review), 23: 494; Methoden der Mikrobiologischen Bodenforschung (book review), 495; biography of Glinka, K. D., 25: 1; soil biology and biochemistry, 29; see **Halsted B. D.**; **Lipman, J. G.**, and **Joffe, J. S.**
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Cook, R. S.** Incubation studies with soil fungi, 1: 275.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Curtis, R. E.** The actinomycetes of the soil, 1: 99; occurrence of actinomycetes in the soil, 6: 309.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Davison, W. C.** Enzymes (book review), 23: 81.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Dubos, R. J.** Catalytic power of the soil, 22: 407.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Fred, E. B.** Tentative outline of the plate method for determining the number of microorganisms in the soil, 14: 27.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Heukelekian, O.** Decomposition of cellulose, 17: 275.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Karunakar, P. D.** Nitrogen fixation and mannite decomposition 17: 379.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Starkey, R. L.** Partial sterilization of soil and biological activities, 16: 137; II, 247; III, 343; carbon dioxide evolution, 17: 141; organic matter and number of soil microorganisms, 373.
- Waksman, S. A.**, and **Tenney, F. G.** Origin and nature of soil "humus": IV, 22: 395; composition of natural organic materials: I, 24: 275; II, 317.
- Walker, S. S.** Effect of aeration on lime requirement of muck soil, 9: 77.
- Walter, H.** Saturation of plants with water (abst.), 22: 219.
- Wank, M. E.** See **Lipman, C. B.**
- Warner, H. W.** See **Brown, P. E.**
- Watson, E. B.** Clay boulders and the rolling action of water, 3: 513.
- Waynick, D. D.** See **Lipman, C. B.**; **Sharp, L. T.**
- Wehrmann, O.** See **Gehring, A.**
- Weidemann, A. G.** See **McCool, M. M.**; **McCool, M. M.**, and **Schlubatis, G.**
- Weiss, F.** Action law of the growth factor (abst.), 22: 219; study of forest soils, 25: 75.
- Werkman, C. H.** See **Gibbs, W. M.**
- West, E. S.** See **Lipman, C. B.**, **Davis, A. R.**, and.
- Wheeting, L. C.** Added salts and the moisture of soils, 19: 287; influence of liming, temperature and compaction, 459; influence of hydration on colloidal solutions, 20: 363; see **McCool, M. M.**

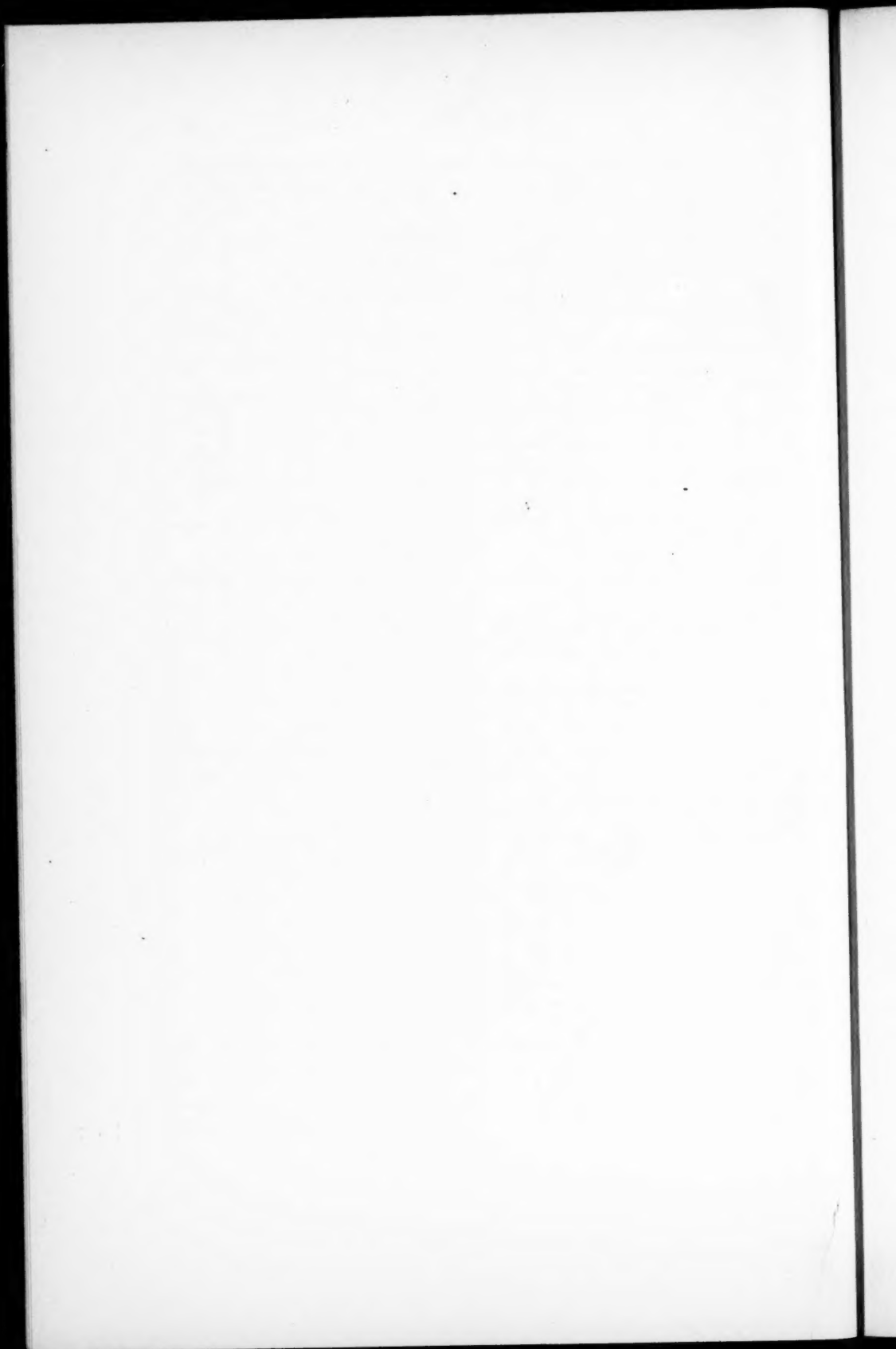
- White, J. W.**, and Holben, F. J. Residual effects of manurial treatments; I, 18: 201; II, 20: 313; III, 22: 61.
- Whiting, A. L.** See **Heck, A. F.**
- Whiting, A. L.**, Fred, E. B., and Helz, G. E. Study of root-nodule bacteria of wood's clover, 22: 467.
- Whiting, A. L.**, and Hansen, R. Cross-inoculation studies with nodule bacteria, 10: 291.
- Whiting, A. L.**, and Heck, A. F. Assimilation of phosphorus, 22: 477.
- Whiting, A. L.**, and Richmond, T. E. Effect of sweet clover on soil nitrates, 22: 1; composition of biennial white sweet clover, 83; nitrification of sweet clover, 24: 31.
- Whiting, A. L.**, and Schoonover, W. R. Decomposition of clover tops in soil, 9: 137; nitrogen fixation by cowpeas and nodule bacteria, 10: 411.
- Widtsøe, J. A.** See **Gardner, W.**
- Wiegner, G.** Wiegner-Gessner apparatus, 23: 377.
- Wiegner, G.**, and Jenny, H. Anleitung zum quantitativen agrikulturchemischen Praktikum (book review), 23: 415.
- Wiessmann, H.** See **Lemmermann, O.**
- Wiley, R. C.**, and Gordon, N. E. Absorption by colloidal silica, 14: 441; availability of absorbed phosphorus, 15: 371.
- Williams, O. B.** Bacterial flora of virgin and cultivated soils, 19: 163.
- Willis, L. G.** See **MacIntire, W. H.**, and Holding, W. A.
- Wilsdon, B. H.**, and Ali, B. Nitrogen fixation in arid climates, 14: 127.
- Wilson, B. D.** Nitrogen in rainwater at Ithaca, New York, 11: 101; effect of plants on leaching, 16: 427; see **Lyon, T. L.**, Bizzel, J. A., and.
- Winogradsky, S.** Direct method in soil microbiology, 25: 37.
- Winsor, H. W.** See **Prince, A. L.**
- Wolkoff, M. I.** Studies on soil colloids: I, 1: 585; colloids and conductivity of salts, 3: 423; adsorption of ammonium sulfate, 561; effect of ammonium sulfate on soybeans, 5: 123; influence of ammonium sulfate on barley, 421; effect of soluble salts and lime on soil moisture, 9: 409; availability of raw rock and acid phosphate, 17: 39; determination of sulfur in soil, 18: 371; effect of iron and aluminum salts, 469.
- Workman, A. C.** See **Bear, F. E.**
- Wright, R. C.** Nitrogen economy in the soil, 10: 249.
- Wright, W. H.** Nodule bacteria of soybeans: I, 20: 95; nodule bacteria of soybeans: II, 131; see **Fred, E. B.**, and **Frazier, W. C.**
- Wyant, Z. N.** Comparison of soil bacteriological technic, 11: 295.
- Wyatt, F. E.** See **Stewart, R.**

## Y

- Yoder, L.** See **Noyes, H. A.**
- Young, J. B.** See **MacIntire, W. H.**; **MacIntire, W. H.**, Shaw, W. M., and.

## Z

- Zaffato, G.**, see **Zerotti, R.**
- Zunker, F.** Soil structure (abst.), 17: 430.
- Zylstra, K.**, see **Hissink, D. J.**



## SUBJECT INDEX

### A

#### Absorption—

- ammonia, by the soil, coefficient of, 2: 586.
- base, by soils, 17: 253.
- calcium, by soil colloidal material, 25: 430.
- carbon dioxide as a factor in, by plants, 20: 39.
- germination of seeds as affected by, 20: 19.
- hydrogen-ion concentration, effect on, 17: 414.
- inorganic elements by plants, 15: 181.
- ion, by plants, 16: 225.
- light effect on, 22: 245.
- phosphate, by filters, 20: 149.
- selective, of ions, 20: 249.

#### Acid—

- constituents of the soil, relation to ammonium sulfate and sodium nitrate, 8: 313.
- development of, in soil due to alcohol, 3: 386.
- digestion of soils with nitric, 15: 383.
- dihydroxystearic, effect on transpiration, 6: 263.
- extraction of soil for analysis, 25: 25.
- in plants, factors influencing, 8: 230.
- land agriculture, 6: 234.
- phosphate, *see* Superphosphate
- salt forming bases, 25: 239.
- silicates reactions in soils, 5: 182.
- treatment, effect on carbon dioxide and potassium liberation from soils, 16: 389.

#### Acidity—*see also* Acid, Soil acidity, H-ion concentration

- effect on—
  - bacteria numbers, 2: 265.
  - vanillin decomposition, 10: 239.
- exchange, independence of, from aluminum and iron, 25: 348.
- in peat soil, 4: 125.
- increase of, in cropped soils, 3: 509.
- mechanism of, from ammonium sulfate 5: 133.

#### Acidity—(continued)

##### of—

- buckwheat, 8: 236.
- cowpeas, 8: 236.
- oat plant, 8: 236.
- plant juices, 9: 341.
- soybeans, 8: 236.
- water extracts, of soils variously treated 7: 184.

#### Acids—

- mineral, source of, 12: 158.
- organic—
  - formation of, in plants, 8: 228.
  - source of, 12: 158.

#### Actinomyces—

- acidophilus, n.sp. isolated from soil, 25: 225.
- ammonia accumulation by, in soil 1: 131.
- as affected by—
  - cropping, 19: 423.
  - freezing, 25: 109.
  - organic matter, 17: 373.
- classification, 1: 109.
- cultural studies of species of, 8: 71.
- growth of, causing potato scab and soil reaction, 14: 61.
- identification of, key, 8: 199.
- isolation of, 6: 316.
- media for, 1: 103; 8: 81.
- microscopic method for demonstrating, 14: 149.
- morphology of, 1: 107; 8: 78.
- nomenclature of, discussion, 8: 77.
- occurrence in soil, 1: 99; 6: 309; 8: 77; 9: 339; 22: 378.
- physiology of, 1: 130; 8: 187.
- relation to soil type, 8: 267.
- species in soil, description, 1: 110; 8: 90.

#### Adsorption—

- bases, in soils, 17: 255.
- by silica, aluminum and iron gels, 14: 2.
- by various substances, 5: 346.
- colloidal oxides of aluminum and iron, 15: 157.
- effect on acid digestion of soils, 15: 383.
- positive and negative, discussion, 17: 396.

**Absorption**—(*continued*)

- substances in soil causing, 17: 255.
- surface area and, 17: 257.

**Aeration**—

- barley development in a heavy clay soil and, 17: 97.
- vanillin decomposition and, 10: 240.

**Agar**—

- agar studies on, 2: 255.
- cultures for plant growth, 7: 205.

**Agricultural**—

- chemistry, methods of analysis (book review), 23: 415.
- plants with high actual and total acidities, 9: 356.

**Agriculture**—

- acid-land, 6: 234.
- aluminum in, 10: 158.
- malarial soil and, 5: 323.

**Alanin** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 187.**Alfalfa**—*see also* Legumes, Bacteria nodule forming.

- as affected by—
  - calcium salts, 14: 238; 16: 127.
  - dextrin, 14: 238.
  - gypsum, 15: 149.
  - inoculation, 3: 90.
  - magnesium silicate, 14: 238.
  - phosphorus, 3: 77; 16: 127.
  - reaction, 15: 23; 25: 404.
  - silica, 14: 238.
  - sodium chloride in culture solution, 16: 183; 18: 353.
  - soil reaction, 10: 301.
  - sulfur, 16: 127; 18: 112.
- bacteria—*see also* Bacteria legume, and nodule.
  - glucose fermentation by, 25: 125.
  - group of, 6: 400.
  - study, 3: 77.
- bacteria, as affected by—.
  - drying, 7: 229.
  - phosphorus, 3: 77, 89.
  - reaction, 15: 23; 24: 103.
- calcium content of, as affected by reaction, 15: 23.
- calcium requirement by, 25: 399.
- decomposition of, 24: 309.
- fertility elements of the soil and, 8: 1.
- inoculation experiments with *B. radicola* on, 7: 222.
- juice, H-ion concentration of, 7: 471.

**Alfalfa**—(*continued*)

## meal—

- carbon-dioxide evolution from soils, which received, 17: 156.
- decomposition of, in soil, 17: 298, 301.
- nitrogen content of, relation to soil reaction, 10: 305.
- nutrients removed by, from subsoil, 23: 261.
- seed germination and, 6: 334.

**Algae** in New Jersey soils, 9: 6.**Alinit**, use of, as soil inoculant, 17: 31.**Alkali**—

- nitrate accumulation and, 2: 355.
- salts—
  - inhibition of, by stable manure, 7: 105.
  - nitrogen fixing organisms and, 6: 174.
  - tolerance of alfalfa, clover, and corn to, 19: 115.
  - toxicity of, 6: 463; 20: 367.
- salts, effect on—
  - alfalfa, 19: 115.
  - azofication, 6: 74.
  - bacteriological activities in soils, 19: 343, 357, 371.
  - barley, 20: 367.
  - corn, 19: 115.
  - clover, 19: 115.
  - crop yields, 6: 471.
  - grain yields, 18: 466.
  - oats, 20: 425.
  - wheat, 18: 449.

## soils—

- acid extract composition, 13: 127.
- amelioration of, 17: 427; 18: 13, 134, 237.
- ammonia in, method of determining, 15: 261.
- ammonification in, 23: 280.
- bacterial numbers in, 18: 248; 23: 275.
- bicarbonates in, 18: 139.
- calcium content of leaching water, 16: 416.
- calcium in, 18: 142.
- calcium sulfate action on, 10: 82.
- carbonates in, 18: 139.
- chemical effects of treating, 18: 133.
- chemical examination of, 25: 351.
- chlorides in, 18: 140.
- gypsum as a means of reclaiming, 13: 125; 18: 244.
- Hungarians, and their reclamation, 18: 379; 21: 455.



**Alkali—**

## soils—(continued)

investigations, 17: 395; 18: 13, 134, 237.  
leaching of, 16: 407; 18: 29, 134; 23:

271.

magnesium content of leaching water,  
16: 416.

magnesium in, 18: 145.

nitrification and, 4: 214; 18: 248.

nitrogen in, 18: 147.

nitrogen in drainage waters of, 16: 421.  
organic carbon in drainage waters of,

16: 422.

organic treatments for, 13: 126.

origin of, theory, 17: 426; 18: 13; 21:  
455.

permeability of, sulfur for improving,  
25: 443.

phosphorus in, 18: 145.

phosphorus in drainage waters of, 16:  
419.

physical structure of, 18: 21.

potassium in, 18: 146.

potassium in drainage waters of, 16:  
420.

productivity of, leached and unleached,  
23: 271.

reaction of, 18: 139; 25: 444.

silica-colloidal in, 18: 141.

sodium in, 18: 145.

soil solution of, 16: 465.

soluble salts removal from, 16: 412.

solubility of anions in, 12: 261.

sulfur for, 2: 205; 11: 385; 13: 215; 17:  
398; 18: 20, 245.

sulfur in, 18: 146.

surface tension of extracts of, 17: 396.

synthetic and natural removal of so-  
dium salts from, 16: 414.

variability of, 14: 177.

water extract composition, 13: 127.

water-soluble salts in, 20: 483.

## soils, as affected by—

alum, 17: 401; 18: 20; 134, 237.

peat, 17: 398; 18: 20, 134, 237.

sodium salts treatment, 16: 409.

sulfur, 17: 398; 18: 20, 134, 237; 25:  
443.

## soils, base exchange—

as foundation for study of 18: 29.

in relation to, 20: 477.

**Alkaline solutions, effect on soils, 11:  
150.**

**Alkalinity—**

changes in manure, 7: 268.

vanillin decomposition and, 10: 239.

**Alum—**

colloids of alkali soils as affected by, 17:  
401; 18: 20, 134, 437.

nitric nitrogen determination as affected  
by, 4: 187.

**Aluminum—**

active, as affected by—

acid phosphate, 6: 274

carbonates, 18: 290.

lime, 20: 184.

manurial treatment, 6: 272.

phosphates, 18: 290; 20: 184.

active in acid soils, 15: 131; 24: 205.

adsorption by colloids, 15: 157.

agriculture and, 10: 158.

amount of, in plants grown in soil and  
water cultures, 19: 192.

chloride, effect on vapor pressure, 25: 415.

colloids, prevalence of, in soil, 17: 404.

compounds in soil, 10: 164.

dialysis experiments, 20: 196.

effect on—

physiology of plants, 20: 205.

sweet clover in presence of calcium car-  
bonate and acid phosphate, 10: 169.

extractable by solvents, 13: 345.

gel, heat of reaction of, and hydroxides, 23:  
243.

hydroxide—

effect on nutrient solutions, 7: 212.

solubility of, in water at different pH  
values, 20: 192.

hydroxide, absorption of—

calcium acid phosphate, 14: 2; 15: 159.

calcium from calcium carbonate 17:  
265.

calcium oxide, 19: 137.

calcium sulfate, 19: 129.

nitrate, 15: 158.

sulfate, 15: 158.

hydroxide, as affected by—

hydrogen-ion concentration, 20: 190.

phosphate in solution, 20: 188.

in—

acid soils, 6: 259.

ammonium soil extract, 8: 318.

chernozem soils, 1: 432.

drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 180.

hydrochloric acid (0.2N) soil extracts,  
8: 317.

**Aluminum—**

in—(continued)

- Nebraska soils, 1: 416.
  - plants, 10: 159.
  - potassium chloride soil extracts, 8: 316.
  - salt extracts of acid soils, 16: 202.
  - soil solution, 20: 195.
  - method of determining, 19: 185; 20: 185.
  - oxide, inversion of sugar by, 5: 341.
  - phosphate—
    - agricultural value of, 13: 355.
    - solubility of, in alkaline solution, 13: 391.
  - precipitation of, in presence of silicates, carbonates and phosphates, 18: 281.
  - relation to—
    - acid soils, 25: 345.
    - heat of wetting, 19: 480.
    - plant growth, 20: 181, 202; 24: 163.
    - soil reaction, 20: 181; 24: 205.
    - soil solution, 20: 181.
  - replacement by colloidal, 15: 157.
  - salts—
    - effect on phosphorus recovery from soil, 18: 469.
    - nature of, in soil, 13: 81.
    - plant growth in water cultures with, 13: 23.
    - stimulants and fertilizers, 10: 160.
  - soil acidity and, 10: 153; 24: 205.
  - soluble salts in the soil, 10: 158; 23: 236.
  - solubility, as affected by—
    - calcium oxide in presence of phosphates, 20: 187.
    - nitrification, 7: 193.
    - phosphates, 20: 187.
    - sulfonation, 7: 193.
  - solutions, immersion of seeds in, 20: 250.
  - sulfate, effect on—
    - growth of barley and rye, 6: 269.
    - hydrogen-ion concentration of soils, 8: 319.
    - nodulation of soybeans, 17: 455.
    - vapor pressure of soils, 25: 415.
  - toxicity of, discussion, 7: 281; 24: 163.
  - water soluble, in soils, 15: 110.
- Alumino-silicates**, electrokinetic behavior of, 25: 289.
- Amide**, acid, fraction of nitrogen in peat, 11: 457.
- Amide**, nitrogen in soils, *see* Nitrogen.
- Amides**, effect on denitrifying process in soils, 19: 38.

**Amino acids—**

- effect on nitrate determination by Devarda method, 10: 335.
- heat effect on, 5: 207.
- nitrification of, 20: 341.

**Ammonia—see also** Ammonification, Ammonium.

- absorption of, by—
  - carbon black, 6: 409.
  - soil colloids, 20: 333.
  - soils, 6: 410.
- accumulation—
  - by actinomycetes in soil, 1: 131.
  - in forest soils, 24: 360.
  - in soil infusion from heated and unheated, 9: 333.
  - protein simplification and, 4: 390.
  - straw mulch and, 20: 255.
- carbon dioxide production by soil organisms and, 5: 225.
- determination methods, 6: 408; 8: 244; 15: 261; 18: 255, 409.
- distribution of, in soils, 2: 305.
- evolution from soil, 1: 90.
- extraction of, from soil, 5: 481.
- extraction of soil with, 6: 376; 8: 318.
- fixing capacity of calcium sulfate, 7: 283.
- formation, as affected by—
  - aeration, 7: 303.
  - aluminum salts, 13: 101.
  - calcium carbonate, 7: 298.
  - clover tops, green and dry, 9: 144.
  - cottonseed meal, 7: 296.
  - dried blood additions, 7: 308.
  - moisture content of soil, 7: 298; 10: 367.
  - sulfur treatment of the soil, 21: 247.
- forming power of soil from organic matter, 2: 194.
- heat effect on, in soils, 5: 206.
- lime effects on, 1: 90; 12: 140.
- nitrogen—
  - accumulation with *B. subtilis*, 9: 335.
  - in soils, 3: 405.
  - pineapple growth with, 20: 227.
  - use of, by plants, 5: 123.
- oxidation of, by microorganisms, 17: 57.
- production—
  - from proteins, 1: 517.
  - in heated soils, 7: 45.
- relation to—
  - carbon dioxide and nitrates in soil, 7: 293.

**Ammonia—**

- relation to—(continued)
  - crop yield, 3: 410.
  - nitrifying power of soils, 3: 408.
  - seed germination, 7: 53.
- retention as influenced by lime requirement, 6: 405.
- vertical distribution of, in soils, 2: 328.
- water-soluble, in soils treated with anti-septics, 3: 372.

**Ammonification—see also Fungi.**

- antagonistic action of salts as measured by, 10: 77.
- as affected by—
  - acid phosphate, 4: 376.
  - alcohol 3: 372.
  - alkali salts, 19: 343, 371.
  - alkali soils, 23: 280.
  - alkalinity of soil, 4: 386.
  - aluminum salts, 13: 81, 99.
  - ammonium phosphate (Ammo-Phos), 5: 15.
  - ammonium sulfate, 2: 89.
  - anions, 4: 395.
  - burnt lime, 4: 48.
  - calcium carbonate, 4: 443.
  - calcium salts, 2: 456; 13: 256.
  - carbohydrates, 6: 418.
  - carbonates, 13: 260.
  - chlorides, 13: 258.
  - climate, 1: 13.
  - dextrose, 4: 373.
  - dicyandiamid, 17: 497.
  - drying of soil, 3: 60.
  - gasoline treatment of soil, 3: 374.
  - guanil urea sulfate, 17: 497.
  - gypsum, 15: 141.
  - heat, 2: 370.
  - iron salts, 2: 461; 10: 83.
  - leachings, 1: 292.
  - lime, 6: 418; 12: 135, 146.
  - limestone fineness, 4: 39, 47.
  - magnesium salts, 2: 458; 13: 257.
  - manganese salts, 2: 67, 459.
  - manure, fresh, 24: 83.
  - moisture, 1: 276; 2: 46, 267; 13: 253.
  - mulching soil, 22: 53.
  - nitrate, 12: 259.
  - nitrogenous materials, 6: 418.
  - petroleum, 14: 468.
  - potassium salts, 2: 455; 13: 254.
  - sampling of soil, 6: 132.
  - sodium nitrate, 4: 364.

**Ammonification—**

- as affected by—(continued)
    - sodium salts, 2: 451; 13: 254.
    - straw, 12: 242.
    - sulfates, 13: 261.
    - sulfur oxidation, 5: 319.
    - temperature, 2: 59, 367.
    - toluene, 2: 370; 3: 372.
    - tree products, 13: 303.
    - volatile antiseptics, 3: 377.
  - as an autocatalytic chemical reaction, 2: 483; 4: 325.
  - discussion on, 3: 73; 15: 49.
  - efficiency of, by bacteria, 2: 367.
  - experiments: 1: 54, 351, 384, 541; 2: 142, 161, 451; 3: 41; 4: 321, 363; 6: 418, 451; 12: 135, 145, 173; 15: 49; 19: 343.
  - mathematical discussion of, 2: 483; 4: 325.
  - nature of, 2: 481; 4: 321.
  - of—
    - casein, 1: 54, 351; 4: 392, 444; 6: 418.
    - cottonseed meal, 1: 292, 384, 559; 2: 5, 59, 143, 194; 3: 59, 70, 503; 4: 43, 369.
    - dicyanamid, 17: 497.
    - dried blood, 1: 57, 292, 351, 384, 556; 2: 5, 89, 143, 194, 452; 3: 42, 56, 65, 501; 4: 43, 366; 6: 418.
    - fish-guano, 3: 70.
    - guanil sulfate, 17: 497.
    - peptone, 3: 41, 55, 503; 4: 39.
    - protein, 1: 519; 6: 418.
    - rye 2: 5.
    - soybeans, 2: 5.
    - tankage, 3: 67.
    - vetch 2: 5.
  - relation to—
    - acid and non-acid soils, 1: 325.
    - fixation of nitrogen, 10: 379.
    - fungi, 6: 142; 16: 209.
    - moisture equivalent, 10: 381.
    - nitrification, 10: 379.
    - nitrogen availability, 3: 63.
    - protozoa in soil, 1: 141.
    - soil reaction, 1: 541.
- Ammonium—see also Ammonia.**
- availability, 5: 1.
  - carbonate—
    - as flocculating agent, 1: 597.
    - effect on soybean growth, 1: 164.
  - chloride as flocculating agent, 1: 589.

**Ammonium—(continued)**

ions, absorption of, as influenced by cations, 2: 583.

nitrate, effect on—

- acidity of oat juice, 8: 239.
- calcium in drainage water, 9: 241.
- corn growth, 9: 239.
- phosphorus assimilation, 7: 125.
- rock phosphate availability, 9: 241.
- soybean growth, 1: 164.

oxalate, effect on soil solution, 25: 148.

phosphate, effect on—

- ammonification, 5: 15.
- biological factor in the soil, 5: 1.
- chemical factor in the soil, 5: 1.
- soybean growth, 1: 164.

review of studies on, 5: 2.

salts, effect on active aluminum, 24: 210.

sulfate—see also Fertilizers.

absorption by soils and quartz-sand, 3: 561.

absorption of ammonia from, 5: 133.

availability, 3: 487; 19: 467; 25: 333.

comparison with sodium nitrate, 7: 123.

efficiency of, for barley, 5: 450; 6: 265.

in relation to agriculture, bibliography, 5: 468.

in sand cultures, 5: 123.

methods of application, discussion, 2: 340.

nitric nitrogen production from, 7: 187; 10: 267.

nitrification of, in corn plots, 17: 338.

recovery of nitrogen from, 1: 503; 17: 326.

significance of the sulfur in, for soils, 5: 81.

utilization of, by soil fungi, 5: 18.

versus other nitrogen fertilizers, 5: 86; 7: 122.

sulfate, effect on—

- barley, 5: 421.
- basic constituents of soils, 8: 313.
- calcium leachings, 17: 251.
- capillary rise of water, 9: 426.
- carbon dioxide evolution, 1: 86.
- limestone decomposition, 22: 65.
- organic matter decomposition, 1: 89.
- phosphorus extraction from soil, 17: 53.
- respiration power of soil, 17: 151.
- soil reaction, 3: 507; 4: 56; 8: 313; 24: 210.
- soybean growth, 1: 164.
- water evaporation from soils, 9: 418.

**Ammonium—**

sulfate, effect on—(continued)

- sulfate, oxidation of by—
- microorganisms, 17: 59.
- Nitrosomonas, 8: 451.

**Ammono-Phos**, see Ammonium phosphate.

**Antiseptics**, nitrogen-fixing organisms and, 6: 175; see also Soil antiseptics.

**Arginine** in soils, 1: 523.

**Arsenic**, relation to plant growth, 14: 111, 119.

**Ascomycetes** in soil, 3: 579.

**Asparagin—**

effect on nitrate determination, 4: 198; 10: 335.

in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 188.

**Atmospheric—**

carbon dioxide, soil respiration as source of, 23: 437.

substances, precipitation of, 15: 205.

**Autocatalysis** reaction, 2: 481.

**Auximones** and plant growth, 17: 193.

**Azofication—**see also Nitrogen fixation.

experiments, 1: 65; 3: 43; 6: 163.

gypsum effects, 15: 143.

salt influence on, 13: 481.

**Azotobacter—**

as affected by—

- cropping, 22: 380.
- drying, 6: 193.
- as indicator of soil acidity, 4: 145.
- composition of, 3: 79.
- distribution of, in forest soils, 24: 351.
- energy sources for, 6: 179.
- in Hawaiian soils, 2: 183.
- inoculating soil with, 20: 73.
- metabolism of, 6: 185.
- method of isolating, 25: 41.
- nitrogen fixation by, 19: 99.
- pigment production by, 6: 187.

relation to—

- nitrate accumulation, 6: 191.
- other organisms, 6: 191.
- soil reaction, 17: 183.
- thermal death point of, 21: 101.
- vinlandii, fixation of nitrogen by, 17: 386.

**B****Bacillus—**

- albidus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 445.
- almus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 446.

**Bacillus—(continued)**

- cereus, enzyme production, 1: 187.
  - cholera suis, enzyme production, 1: 187.
  - coli—
    - carbohydrate decomposition, 1: 189.
    - enzyme production, 1: 187.
  - concitatus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 448.
  - deciduusus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 450.
  - festinus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 451.
  - fluorescens liqui—
    - composition of, 3: 79.
    - enzyme production, 1: 187.
  - gilvus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 453.
  - imminutus, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 455.
  - iugis, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 456.
  - megaterium—
    - enzyme production, 1: 187.
    - oxidizing power of, 5: 232.
  - proteus, enzyme production, 1: 187.
  - radicicola—
    - effect on nitrogen content of alfalfa, 20: 55.
    - immunological tests with, 20: 110.
    - longevity of, 7: 217.
    - serological studies with, 20: 50, 109.
    - strains of, 20: 45.
    - thermal death point of, 21: 100.
  - radicicola as affected by—
    - calcium carbonate, 21: 97.
    - cropping, 22: 378.
    - gypsum, 9: 452.
    - oxygen supply, 21: 94.
    - phosphates, 3: 83; 21: 97.
    - shaking media, 21: 95.
    - sugars, 21: 95.
  - root, of *Calendula officinalis*, 19: 43.
  - subtilis—
    - enzyme production, 1: 182.
    - influence of, on assimilation of organic nitrogen, 3: 155, 162.
    - oxidizing power, 5: 232.
    - protein decomposition, 1: 182.
  - vulgatis—
    - enzyme production, 1: 187.
    - oxidizing power, 5: 232.
- Bacteria—see also Microorganisms.**  
ammonifying efficiency of, 4: 391.

**Bacteria—(continued)**

- as affected by—
  - acids in soil solution, 3: 289.
  - alkali in soil solution, 3: 289.
  - climate, 1: 11.
  - cropping, 19: 423.
  - heat, 2: 370.
  - organic matter, 17: 373.
  - salts, 2: 443; 6: 137.
  - soil type, 8: 260.
  - sterilization, 1: 263; 7: 3.
  - straw, 12: 245.
  - toluene, 2: 370.
- associative action with fungi, 2: 44.
- biochemical activity of the spores of soil, 9: 329.
- cellulose dissolving, 1: 439.
- composition of, 3: 79.
- enzymes, 1: 179.
- flagella, method of staining, 20: 100.
- iron deposition, rôle of, in hardpan formation, 23: 467.
- lactis viscosum*, occurrence of, in soil, 5: 487.
- legume— *see also* Legume.
  - endurance of, in presence of other organisms, 21: 46.
  - fermentation characters of, 24: 217.
  - gum production by, 20: 101.
  - infecting cultures of, 6: 53, 69.
  - movement of, in soil, 14: 29.
  - nitrate effect on, 10: 343.
  - pyruvic acid production by, 25: 123.
  - thermal death point of, 21: 101.
- media—
  - Brown's, 1: 366.
  - Buchanan's buffer effect of, 20: 103.
  - legume-infecting, 6: 55.
  - Lipman mannite, 3: 417.
  - soil, 1: 153, 366.
- microscopic study of, 25: 269.
- nitrate forming, isolation of, 12: 257.
- nitrifying, as affected by—
  - acid and non-acid soils, 1: 318.
  - straw in soil, 12: 256.
- nitrifying, isolation and study of, 8: 427.
- nitrogen-fixing—*see also* Nitrogen fixation.
  - carbon-dioxide production by, 5: 235.
  - distribution, discussion, 6: 167.
  - food requirements by, 6: 171.
  - morphology of, 6: 188.
  - pure, 4: 14.
  - reaction of media for, 6: 169.
  - symbiotic, and soil acidity, 5: 175.

**Bacteria—(continued)**

- nitrogen-fixing, as affected by—
  - alkali salts, 6: 174.
  - antiseptics, 6: 175.
  - colloids, 6: 177.
  - organic soil constituents, 6: 177.
- nodule—see also Nodule, Legume, Bacteria legume, Alfalfa, Clover.
  - alfalfa group, 6: 400.
  - clover group, 6: 400.
  - cross-inoculation studies with, 10: 291; 24: 413.
  - distribution of, by storms, 23: 360.
  - effect on nitrogen content of peas, 14: 413.
  - life cycle of, 21: 105.
  - nitrogen fixation experiments with, 10: 411; 20: 131.
  - number of, in soil, 23: 357.
  - of Wood's clover, 22: 467.
  - strains of, 20: 95.
- nodule, as affected by—
  - climatic condition, 23: 355.
  - host plant, 23: 359.
  - soil reaction, 10: 304; 15: 23, 37.
  - soybean germination, 7: 237.
  - temperature, 23: 356.
- non-symbiotic relationship to nitrate accumulation, 2: 356.
- numbers—see also Bacterial counts.
  - Budinov formula for counting, 14: 83.
  - crop yields and, 14: 337; 16: 63.
  - daily changes in the, 23: 253.
  - direct method for counting, 25: 39.
  - in soil, 1: 105, 153, 370, 371, 373; 19: 304.
  - plate method and microscopic, compared, 25: 271.
  - relation to fungi, 19: 301.
  - starch-soil plate method, 25: 43.
- numbers, as affected by—
  - acidity of medium, 2: 265.
  - acids, 3: 290.
  - agar concentration, 2: 261.
  - alkali soils, 18: 248.
  - calcium carbonate, 1: 332; 4: 442.
  - common plate method, 14: 91.
  - drying of soil, 3: 60.
  - errors in plate counting, 2: 280.
  - gelatin additions, 1: 332.
  - heating, 9: 331; 16: 151.
  - sampling, 3: 500.
  - storage of medium, 2: 278.

**Bacteria—**

numbers, as affected by—(continued)

- storage of soil, 3: 38.
- straw, 12: 245.
- toluene, 16: 151.
- phosphorus in soil and, 7: 145.
- potassium requirements of, 5: 219.
- pure cultures of, discussion, 25: 38.
- relation to—
  - actinomyces, 1: 105.
  - protozoa in soils, 1: 141; 2: 177, 363.
  - soil depth, 1: 363; 9: 331.
  - season, 1: 363; 3: 38, 52.
- rhizobium radicicolum, 20: 143.
- serological studies, 20: 50, 109.
- solvent action of, 6: 141.
- soybean—
  - growth of different strains of, 13: 273.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration for, 13: 275.
  - strains of 20: 95, 136.
- spore distribution in soil at various depths, 9: 331.
- spore formers and non-spore formers, sterilization effects on, 16: 353.
- spores, biochemical activity of, in the soil, 9: 329.
- sulfur oxidizing—
  - acid produced by, 13: 169.
  - classification of, 13: 331.
  - description of, 12: 487.
  - isolation of, 12: 476; 13: 161.
  - media for, 13: 116.
  - silicon tetrafluoride, influence of, on, 13: 117.
- thermophilic, in soil, 23: 47.
- types of, as affected by straw, 12: 245.
- vanillin oxidation by, 7: 475; 10: 237.
- warm weather and cold weather, 3: 46.

**Bacterial—**

activities—

- aluminum, production of soluble by, 13: 97.
- crop production and 10: 38.
- in wheat seed-bed, 2: 193.
- lime-requirement and, a correlation, 4: 433.
- soil acidity and, 12: 133.
- activities, as affected by—
  - fertilizers, 4: 452.
  - gypsum, 9: 437.
  - limestone fineness, 4: 37.
  - moisture, 10: 361; 13: 251.

**Bacterial—**

- activities, as affected by—(*continued*)
  - soluble salts, 13: 251.
  - tree products, 13: 303; 24: 351.
- activities, relation to—
  - phosphorus availability, 13: 170.
  - soil constants, 10: 381.
- analysis of soil samples, 8: 259.
- counts—*see also* Bacteria numbers.
  - by the plate method, 2: 280.
  - formula for experimental error in, 2: 280; 14: 83.
- counts, as affected by—
  - cultivation, 2: 193.
  - lime, 21: 443.
  - petroleum 14: 469.
  - phosphorus, 3: 80.
  - relation of total, to liquefiers, 8: 266.
  - sampling of soil, 6: 133.
- cultures, reduction potentials of, 9: 199.
- fertilizer preparations, 17: 19.
- flora in virgin and cultivated soils, 19: 163; *see also* Soil flora.
- life, effect of soil conditions on, 15: 329.
- soil preparations for non-legume crops, 17: 31.
- types in frozen soil, 21: 225.

**Bacteriological—**

- analysis of soil, technic, 11: 295.
- errors in soil, analyses, 2: 157.
- soil sampler for, studies, 4: 109.
- studies on agar-agar, 2: 255.
- study of a soil type by new methods, 25: 263.
- tests in field soils, 22: 383.
- tests, precautions in sampling soil for, 6: 131.

**Bacteriophage in nodules of leguminous plants, 17: 434.****Bacterium—**

- castigatum, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 458.
- idoneum, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 460.
- lactis viscosum in soil, 5: 487.
- lucrosum, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 461.
- mycoides—
  - carbohydrate decomposition, 1: 189.
  - composition of, 3: 79.
  - enzyme production, 1: 182.
  - oxidizing power, 5: 232.
  - protein decomposition 1: 183.

**Bacterium—(*continued*)**

- paludosum, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 463.

**Barium—**

- in Nebraska soils, 1: 420.
- phosphate as a source of phosphorus, 8: 488; 12: 192.

**Barley—**

- fertilizer nutrients required by, 19: 169.
- influence of nitrifying bacteria on, 18: 323.
- tolerance of, for sodium chloride, 22: 311.

**Base Exchange—*see also* Bases, Electro-dialysis.**

- adsorption and, 18: 394.
- as affected by—
  - dehydration of soils, 25: 169.
  - heating the neutral salt solution, 21: 189.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration, 17: 414.
- hydrogen ion in the complex, method of determining, 21: 183.
- manganese in the complex of, 25: 358.
- mechanism of, 25: 305.
- method of determining the, capacity, 23: 128.
- quinhydrone electrode in studying, 24: 403.
- relation to—
  - alkali soils, 20: 477.
  - silica-sesquioxide ratio, 25: 304.
  - soil acidity, 20: 477.
- soil complex capable of, 21: 181.
- studies in, 18: 389; 24: 403.
- unsaturation of complex capable of, 23: 129.

**Bases—**

- absorbed, characterizing soil types by, 17: 429.
- absorption and interchange of, 7: 380; 17: 255, 414; 18: 131.
- absorption as influenced by soluble salts, 17: 270.
- acid-salt forming, 25: 239.
- acid-soluble and adsorbed, relation of, 15: 275.
- adsorbed, method of determining, 15: 269.
- adsorption and absorption of by soils, 17: 255, 429.
- adsorption of, as affected by H-ion concentration, 17: 414.
- arid and humid soil, 25: 379.
- dispersion of soil, as affected by, 25: 419.



**Bases—(continued)**

- exchange of, 8: 315, 21: 468; 24: 57.
- exchangeable, as affected by various treatments, 25: 358, 445.
- loss of, 12: 160.
- relation of iron and aluminum to, in tropical soils, 21: 371.
- removal of, effect on soil acidity, 9: 28.
- replaceable, effect on heat of wetting of soils and soil colloids, 20: 329.
- replaceable, relation to vapor pressure of soils, 25: 485.

**Basic—**

- constituents of soil, relation to ammonium sulfate and sodium nitrate, 8: 313.
- exchange between soil separates and salt solutions, 11: 353.

**Bentonite**, colloidal behavior of, 20: 172.

**Benzamide** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 186.

**Bicarbonates—**

- equilibrium studies of sodium, and carbonates, 16: 295.
- extraction of, from alkali soils, 16: 467.
- in loess soils, 2: 379.
- in Wyoming alkali soils, 4: 208.

**Biological—see also Microorganisms, Bacteria**

- activities, as affected by potassium, 5: 219.
- investigations in soil plots, 3: 499.

**Bone meal** for soybeans, 25: 314.

**Borax**, fertilizers containing, effect on corn and potatoes, 11: 360; 12: 79.

**Boron—**

- effect on soybean growth, 23: 83.
- presence of, in soils, 15: 8.

**Blueberries**, fertilizers on, 10: 309.

**Buckwheat—**

- calcium content of, hay, 12: 31.
- growth of, in culture solution, 15: 285.
- hydrogen-ion concentration of, juice, 8: 236.
- phosphorus content of, hay, 12: 31.
- salt requirement for, in sand cultures, 6: 1; 14: 391.
- sodium nitrate as fertilizer for, 24: 85.

**Buffer—**

- action—
  - explanation of, 8: 227.
  - mannite decomposition and, 15: 344.
- systems of legumes and non-legumes, 15: 181.
- values of soils, 16: 487.

**C****Cabbage—**

- composition of, factors influencing, 24: 299.
- mineral content of, 20: 451.
- nitrogen content of, 20: 453.
- sugar content of, 20: 453.

**Caesium**, determination of, in soils, 15: 5.

**Caffein**—in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 187.

**Calcium—see also Lime.**

- absorption of, by—
  - colloidal clay, 24: 365.
  - colloidal material, 25: 430.
  - plants, 16: 228.

alumino-sulfate, solubility of, 19: 146.

antagonistic action of, and iron salts, 10: 77.

availability and soil acidity, 5: 174.

bicarbonate, leaching of, from rock phosphate in corn culture, 9: 242.

carbonate—see also Lime, Liming.

- absorption by, 2: 99.
- chemical effects of, 5: 379, 383; 18: 396.

decomposition of, in soils, causes for, 17: 264.

drainage water content of, 17: 249.

fineness of, effect on base absorption, 17: 267.

leachings in lysimeter experiments, 7: 380.

soil equilibrium, 25: 429.

solubility of, 7: 381; 15: 75.

carbonate, effect on—

- aluminum salts in the soil, 10: 169.
- ammonium absorption, 2: 317.
- ammonia distribution, 2: 335.
- ammonification, 2: 457.
- bacterial numbers in soils, 4: 442, 451.
- biological activities in the soil, 16: 254.
- carbon dioxide evolution, 1: 86.
- cellulose decomposition, 17: 287.
- chemico-physical condition of mineral soils, 18: 387.
- iron adsorption by soils, 22: 165.
- nitrate determination, 4: 197.
- nitrate formation in soils, 1: 328.
- nitrification, 1: 328; 4: 213.
- nitrification in alkali soils, 4: 218.
- organic matter decomposition, 1: 86.
- osmotic pressure of soils, 5: 384.
- phosphorus availability in sulfur-floats mixtures, 5: 280.



**Calcium—****carbonate, effect on—(continued)**

- phosphorus extraction from soil, 17: 53.
  - potassium leachings, 8: 346.
  - solubility of plant food, 7: 127.
  - soybean germination, 6: 336.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164; 4: 450.
  - sulfate solubility, 17: 75.
  - sulfur oxidation, 1: 359; 6: 356.
  - toxicity of copper sulfate to wheat, 3: 341.
- chloride, effect on—
- ammonification, 2: 457.
  - liberation of soil acids, 6: 43.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
  - soybean nodulation, 25: 319.
  - vapor pressure of soils, 25: 415.
- citrate, effect on crop yield, 14: 237.
- compounds in soils, method of determining, 11: 364.
- concentration of, in soils and alfalfa growth, 25: 401.
- conservation of, as related to rate of liming, 24: 484.
- content of a number of plants, 5: 188; 10: 52; 12: 31, 35.
- cyanamide as a source of nitrogen, 12: 189.
- effect on—
- alfalfa composition and yield, 16: 127.
  - calcium content of crops, 14: 233.
  - potassium liberation from soil, 16: 217.
  - protein of soybeans, 22: 175.
  - soybean inoculation, 25: 313.
- extraction of, by different solvents, 13: 348.
- function of, 10: 49.
- hydroxide—
- carbonation of, upon exposure, 7: 336.
  - conversion of, to calcium carbonate, 17: 70.
  - effect on adsorption of calcium sulfate, 19: 126, 129.
  - solubility of, 7: 381.
- in—
- cultivated soils, 8: 323.
  - loess soil, 2: 384.
  - rainwater, 15: 205.
  - sand cultures, 2: 207.
  - virgin soils, 8: 323.
  - Wyoming alkali soil, 4: 208.

**Calcium—(continued)****leachings, as affected by—**

- ammonium nitrate, 9: 241.
  - ammonium sulfate, 17: 251.
  - calcium oxide, 16: 452.
  - ferrous sulfate, 16: 452.
  - limestone, 16: 451; 21: 377.
  - magnesium oxide, 16: 452.
  - pyrite, 16: 454.
  - sodium nitrate, 9: 241; 17: 251.
  - sulfur, 16: 455.
- leachings of, from lysimeters, 16: 323.
- losses from soils treated with limestone, 21: 384.
- magnesium interchange in soil, 16: 321; 23: 175.
- magnesium ratio, 2: 235, 245; 19: 95.
- method for determining in peat soils, 1: 505.
- movement of, in soil, 6: 288.
- nitrate, effect on—
- ammonification, 2: 457.
  - evaporation of water from soils, 9: 418.
  - Rhizobium leguminosarum, 10: 353.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
- nitrogen ratio in plants, theory on, 15: 185.
- oxide—
- acid-soluble in manured and irrigated soils, 19: 92.
  - adsorption of, by sand and soil, 17: 258.
  - behavior of dry, towards dry carbon dioxide, 7: 333.
  - carbonation in various soil depths, 7: 351; 20: 356.
  - chemical effects of, 5: 379, 383.
  - chemico-physical influence of, on mineral soils, 18: 387; 20: 356.
  - hydration of freshly burned, 7: 341.
- oxide, effect on—
- ammonia absorption, 2: 317, 334.
  - biological activities in the soil, 16: 252.
  - calcium outgo from lysimeters, 16: 450.
  - magnesium outgo from lysimeters, 16: 451.
  - nitrate outgo in lysimeters, 19: 320.
  - osmotic pressure of soils, 5: 384.
  - phosphorus extracted from soil, 17: 53.
  - soil treated with manure, 20: 313.
  - sulfate outgo from lysimeters, 16: 18.
- phosphate—
- acid, adsorption of, by silica, aluminum and iron gel, 14: 2.

**Calcium—**

- phosphate—*(continued)*
  - agricultural value of, 13: 355.
  - solubility of tri, in various solutions, 25: 154.
- phosphate, effect on—
  - alfalfa 3: 88.
  - B. radicola*, 3: 87.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
  - sulfate production, 1: 343.
- relation between the, and nitrogen content of plants, 10: 49.
- relation of, to acidity and liming, 17: 213.
- salts, effect on—
  - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 147.
  - potassium solubility from orthoclase, 15: 174.
  - sulfate outgo from lysimeters, 16: 1, 159; 23: 175.
- salts, solubility of, 25: 470.
- silicate as source of lime, 18: 479; 21: 443; 22: 459.
- silicate (di) for acid soils, 10: 57.
- silicate, effect on—
  - alfalfa, 14: 238.
  - oats, 14: 238.
  - soil reaction, 22: 459.
  - soybeans, 14: 238.
  - sweet clover, 14: 238.
- soils, method of estimating, 10: 1.
- soluble in .04 *N* carbonated water and its relation to fertility, 17: 221.
- soluble, of soils as indication for liming, 19: 441.
- solubility, as affected by—
  - nitrification, 7: 192.
  - sulfocation, 7: 192.
- sulfate—
  - ammonia fixing capacity of, 7: 283.
  - fertilizing value, 1: 353.
- sulfate, effect on—
  - alkali soils, 10: 82.
  - ammonification, 2: 457.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - nitrification in alkali soils, 4: 217, 220.
  - phosphorus extraction from soil, 17: 53.
  - potassium solubility, 6: 250.
  - solubility of plant food, 7: 129.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
  - sulfate production in soils, 1: 343.

**Calcium—(continued)**

- sulfate, solubility of—
  - as affected by lime, 17: 67.
  - in lime water, 16: 19.
  - water-soluble, in Wagner pots and lysimeters, 15: 433.
- Cane sugar**, inversion of, by soils, and other substances, 5: 333, 341.
- Capillarity—**
  - movement of soil moisture by, 7: 313.
  - soil water level, and evaporation, 17: 438.
- Capillary—**
  - moisture holding capacity, 7: 319.
  - potential and its relation to soil-moisture constants, 10: 357.
  - resistance as opposing water movement, 4: 246.
  - rise of soil water, laws of, 20: 358; 22: 199.
  - rise of water as influenced by soluble salts and lime, 9: 409.
  - transmission constant and method of determining it, 10: 103.
  - water, rise of, in alkali soils treated variously, 17: 399.
- Carbohydrate—**
  - decomposition by—
    - B. coli*, 1: 189.
    - B. mycoides*, 1: 189.
  - effect on hydrolysis of fibrin, 3: 319.
- Carbon—**
  - bisulfide method and apparatus for, use in soils, 10: 422; 12: 61; *see also* Soil fumigation, insecticide.
  - bisulfide, effect on—
    - japanese beetle, 12: 43.
    - root-worm of wooly aphis, 10: 421.
    - white grub, 10: 15.
  - black—
    - action in soils, 2: 93.
    - ammonia absorption by, 6: 409.
  - compounds as source of energy for actinomycetes, 8: 171.
  - dioxide—*see also* Carbonic acid.
  - ammonia production by soil organisms and, 5: 225.
  - apparatus, 1: 81; 4: 32; 5: 226, 360; 7: 295; 10: 43; 13: 145; 19: 269, 411; 23: 418, 438; 24: 242; 25: 253.
  - assimilation of, by plants, 23: 434.
  - barley and pea root production of, 15: 190.
  - climatological factor and, 20: 359.

**Carbon—**dioxide—*(continued)*

- crop growth and, 23: 417.
- determination of, in water insoluble carbonates, 10: 41.
- evolution from soil as a method of soil acidity determination, 4: 31, 150.
- evolution of, from soil, 17: 141; 20: 360; 23: 417; 24: 310.
- fertilizing with, 20: 360; 22: 218; 23: 434.
- formation in soil parallel with ammonia and nitrate, 7: 293.
- gasometric and titrimetric method compared, 10: 46.
- in Nebraska soils, 1: 414.
- liberation of, from soils treated with fertilizers on acid, 16: 389.
- methods of study from the soil, 17: 230; 24: 242.
- occurrence of atmospheric, in lime treated soils, 7: 390.
- Reinaus investigation on, remarks, 22: 217.
- soil and, 1: 78; 20: 361.
- soil atmosphere and, 7: 261; 20: 361; 24: 241.
- dioxide, as affected by—
  - aeration, 7: 303.
  - ammonium sulfate, 1: 86.
  - calcium carbonate, 1: 86; 5: 367; 7: 298.
  - cottonseed meal, 7: 296.
  - crops in the soil, 17: 232.
  - dried blood, 7: 308.
  - manure, 20: 361.
  - moisture content of soil, 7: 298.
  - sodium nitrate, 1: 86.
  - soil sterilization, 24: 152.
  - wind, 1: 84.
- dioxide, effect on—
  - absorption of inorganic elements by, 20: 39.
  - calcium hydroxide, 7: 342.
  - calcium in soil solution, 24: 143.
  - crop production, 20: 359.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration of soils, 20: 285.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration of soil extract, 4: 316.
  - lime requirement, 3: 284.
  - limestone solubility, 13: 340.

**Carbon—**dioxide, effect on—*(continued)*

- neutral and acid-salt forming bases, 25: 242.
- phosphate solubility, 12: 28.
- phosphorus in soil solution, 24: 143.
- potassium in soil extracts, 24: 143.
- reaction of minerals, 5: 151.
- solubility of plant food, 7: 136.
- dioxide production—
  - as measure of biochemical activity, 10: 34.
  - by bacteria, 5: 235.
  - by fungi, 5: 235, 359.
  - from heated and unheated soil infusion, 9: 334.
  - from plant roots and plant growth, 17: 229.
- factor in estimating soil organic matter, 13: 1.
- in—
  - cultivated land and land in grass and weeds, 4: 283.
  - humus, 2: 395.
  - limed and unlimed soils, a comparison, 9: 86, 388.
  - loess soil, 1: 197.
  - organic matter, 2: 539.
  - soil-manure mixtures, 7: 262.
- loss of, from clover tops, 9: 146.
- nitrogen ratio—
  - corn-stover, studies, 1: 51.
  - effect on type of bacteria in soil, 1: 49; 25: 40.
  - for soil extracts, 2: 432.
  - in forest floor, 23: 67.
  - in manures, 1: 50.
  - in soils manured and irrigated, 19: 90.
  - of amino acids and nitrification, 20: 346.
  - significance of, 12: 491.
- nitrogen relationships from decomposed clover and, 9: 147.
- organic—
  - content of drift soils, 11: 189.
  - humus ratio, 1: 249.
  - in forest floor, 23: 67.
  - in loess soil, 1: 197.
  - method of determining, 1: 226.
  - ratio of phosphoric acid to, 11: 187.
  - ratio of, to nitrogen, 11: 190.

**Carbonates**—see also Limestone.

analytical error involved in the determination of, 7: 365.

depth of leaching of, in drift soils, 11: 194.

determination, 1: 84; 10: 41.

effect on—

aluminum inactivation, 13: 104.

ammonification, 2: 468.

phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 150.

residual, after application of limestone to acid soils, 15: 297.

residual, on soils treated with various nitrogen and carbon materials, 6: 435; 12: 141.

**Carbonation** of burnt lime in soils, 7: 325.

**Carbonic acid**—see also Carbon dioxide.

reaction of, on silicates, 8: 279.

relation to soil acidity, 5: 151.

**Casein**—see also Ammonification of.

effect on seed germination, 6: 334.

in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 188.

inversion of sugar by, 5: 341.

method of purification, 4: 391.

**Catalytic power** of the soil, 22: 407.

**Catalysts**, studies with, on sulfur oxidation, 5: 274.

**Cataphoresis**—

experiments on clay colloids, 18: 403; 23: 233, 490.

in aluminum chloride-sodium silicate mixtures, 25: 291.

**Cations** absorbed, in soils, method of determining with hydrochloric acid, 16: 473; see also Bases, Base exchange.

**Cellulose**—see also Soil cellulose.

adsorption of, by soil, 18: 194.

decomposition—

by actinomyces, 8: 87, 174.

by bacteria in soil, 1: 437; 17: 275, 298.

by fungi, historical review, 2: 109.

climatic effects on, 1: 28.

in soils of different fertility, 17: 305; 18: 195.

stable manure, action on, 18: 185.

decomposition, as affected by—

ammonium salts, 18: 187.

manure additions, 18: 199.

nitrogen availability, 21: 115.

effect on—

microorganisms in the soil, 17: 375.

nitrification, 6: 425.

plant growth, 17: 199.

**Cellulose**—(continued)

media, preparation of, 1: 438.

method of determining, 18: 188.

**Chemical**—

effect of, salts on soils, 11: 139.

methods of, analyses of soils, 11: 175.

soil sampler for, studies, 4: 109.

**Chernozem**—see Soils chernozem.**Chlorides**—

absorption of, by plants, 16: 232.

effect on—

ammonification, 2: 462.

phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 150.

soil, 11: 143.

sulfate determination, 13: 236.

factors influencing quantitative determination of, 9: 41.

in loess soil, 2: 381.

in rainwater, 15: 217.

in Wyoming alkali soils, 4: 208.

methods of determining, as affected by—

calcium carbonate, 9: 47.

calcium nitrate, 9: 47.

calcium sulfate, 9: 47.

magnesium salts, 9: 47.

sodium salts, 9: 47.

Volhard and Mohr methods for determining, 9: 46.

**Chlorine** in grain grown under irrigation, 19: 325.

**Clay**—

acid, preparation and titration, 24: 406.

areation of, soils, 17: 97.

as soil colloids, 20: 89.

black, from Thesinge, Holland, 17: 434.

boulders, and rolling action of water, 3: 513.

colloidal, 19: 37.

colloidal, effect of H-ion concentration on, 17: 413.

colloids in residual, 20: 473.

electrical charge on, colloid, 18: 401.

iso-electric of, a discussion, 18: 407.

kaolin, effect of electrolytes on, 23: 225.

removal of, from ammonia extracts, 6: 372.

soils, formation of hardpan in, 20: 307.

**Climate**—

data for Nebraska, 1: 206.

effect on—

aluminum content in soils, 1: 34.

ammonification, 1: 13.

cellulose decomposition, 1: 28.

**Climate—****effect on—(continued)**

- humus content in soils, 1: 36.
- iron content of soils, 1: 34.
- lime content of soils, 1: 32.
- manganese content in soils, 1: 34.
- nitrification, 1: 15.
- nitrogen content in soils, 1: 37, 41.
- nitrogen fixation, 1: 22; 6: 200; 14: 127.
- phosphoric acid content in soils, 1: 35.
- potash content of soils, 1: 32.
- properties of soils, 1: 5.
- reaction of soils, 1: 38.
- silica, soluble and insoluble, 1: 30.
- sulfate content in soils, 1: 35.

**relation to—**

- scab on potatoes, 17: 438.
- soil formation, 1: 199.
- soil influences, 23: 363.

**Clover—see also Legumes, Bacteria nodule forming.****as affected by—**

- calcium salts, 14: 238.
- cellulose from wood, 17: 201.
- dextrin, 14: 238.
- gypsum, 15: 148.
- magnesium silicates, 14: 238.
- reaction, 15: 23.
- silica, 14: 238.

**bacteria, 6: 400.****carbon-nitrogen ratio studies in, 1: 51.****composition of white sweet, 22: 83.****effect on calcium content of soil solution, 17: 217.****experiments on subsoil, 3: 17.****hay—**

- calcium content of, 12: 31; 15: 26.
- phosphorus content of, 12: 31.

**inoculation, effect on—**

- nitrogen content of, 7: 457.
- yield, 7: 457.

**juice, H-ion concentration of, 7: 470.****lime effects on, 7: 457.****nodule-formation in, as affected by reaction, 15: 23.****potassium content of, 12: 37.****sweet, decomposition of, 24: 309.****tops, green and cured, decomposition of, 9: 137.****Colloidal—**

- behavior of soils and soil fertility, 20: 169; 21: 181; 23: 127.

**Colloidal—(continued)****clay—**

- calcium absorption by, 24: 365.
- charge on, 18: 401.
- electrodialyzed, phosphorus absorption by, 24: 468.
- content of soil related to volume contraction, 23: 122.
- fraction of soils, a study, 23: 487.
- material in soils, 8: 57; 19: 153.
- phenomena in alkali soils, 17: 395.
- silica, absorption of plant food by, 14: 441.
- soils, two unusual, 20: 419.
- solution of soils, hydration effects on stability, 20: 363.
- substances, effect on growth of wheat, 7: 201.

**Colloids—see also Soil colloids.****alkali soil, effect of alum on, 17: 401.****bases replaceable and, 20: 330.****cataphoresis, see Cataphoresis.****coagulation of, 17: 400.****coating on soil grains, 21: 481.****composition of, in laterite, 13: 428.****flocculation of, 23: 489.****in sand, effect on nutrient solutions, 9: 178.****iron in residual clays and, 20: 473.****method of determining, 23: 319; 25: 367, 474.****soil reaction and, 8: 55.****suction force and, 20: 169.****titration of, 23: 489.****Conductivity of soil solution, 3: 541.****Copper—****sulfate, effect on—****toxicity to wheat, 3: 340.****water absorption by seeds from soil, 3: 273.****sulfate toxicity to nodulation, 17: 455.****Coral sand as source of lime, 4: 330.****Corn—****acidity and growth of, 13: 465.****ammonium phosphate and sulfate for, 5: 63.****calcium content of, as influenced by fertilizers, 9: 238.****culture, distribution of nitrates in soil under, 17: 323.****juice, H-ion concentration of, 7: 470; 13: 466.**

**Corn—(continued)**

- nitrate nitrogen in soils planted to, 17: 337.
- nitrogen content of, as influenced by fertilizers, 9: 238.
- nitrogen content of, as influenced by lime, 1: 489.
- phosphorus content of, as influenced by fertilizers, 9: 238; 23: 462.
- phosphorus utilization by, 24: 9.
- potassium content of, 12: 37; 23: 462.
- removal of bases by, 9: 29.
- rock phosphate availability for, 9: 235.
- roots, acidity of, 13: 472.

**Corn-stover—**

- calcium content of, 12: 31.
- carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
- phosphorus content of, 12: 31.

**Cotton—**

- black arm disease of, 23: 5.
- sulfur as fertilizer for, 14: 435.

**Cottonseed—see also Ammonification, Nitrification.**

- meal in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 189.
- sulfuric acid treatment of, 23: 1.

**Cowpea—**

- carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
- hydrogen-ion concentration of juice, 8: 236.
- nitrification of, 12: 327.
- nitrogen balance in soil with, 9: 298.
- nitrogen fixation by, 10: 411.
- nodule production kinship between, and soybean, 15: 277.

**Creatin in sterile culture for plants, 3: 189.****Crops—**

- as affected by—
  - alkali salts, 19: 371.
  - fertilizing methods, 21: 7, 127.
  - gypsum applications, 9: 440; 15: 146.
  - legumes, 22: 355.
  - straw additions, 20: 159.
- calcium content of, 14: 233.
- moisture supply for, in sandy soils, 21: 197.
- nitrogen in, as affected by limestone, 15: 320.
- nitrogen recovered by, 19: 67.
- phosphorus removed by, 18: 38.
- potash removed by, 18: 41.
- production of, in soils after timothy and clover, 9: 59.

**Crops—(continued)**

- relation to hydrogen-ion concentration values of soils, 14: 22.
- sulfur content of common, 14: 422, 428; 21: 235.

**Culture—**

- media—see also Bacteria, Fungi.
  - acidity affecting number of microbes, 2: 265.
  - Cook's, for fungi, 1: 382.
  - gypsum blocks for, 8: 437.
  - pentosan content of molds grown on various, 15: 485.
  - silicic acid gel for, 8: 439.
  - storage effects on bacterial numbers, 2: 278.
- media for—
  - actinomycetes, 8: 81.
  - nitrate-forming bacteria, 8: 437; 11: 391.
  - nitrite-forming bacteria, 8: 436.
  - purification of fungi, 2: 113.
  - soil bacteria, 1: 153, 366.
- solution, see Nutrient solution.

**Cyanides, presence of, in nodules, 11: 125.****D****Dematiaceae in soils, 3: 584.****Denitrification—**

- investigation on, in tropical soils, 17: 433.
- problem of nitrogen losses through, 24: 285.
- process in soils in relation to amides, 19: 38.
- tree products, effect on, 13: 308.

**Dextrin, effect on crop yields, 14: 237.****Dextrose—**

- carbon-dioxide produced from, added to soils, 17: 153.
- decomposition of, in soil, 17: 298.
- effect on—
  - microorganisms in soil, 17: 375.
  - potassium absorption, 15: 172.
  - influence on ammonification, 4: 373.
  - nitrogen fixation with, 1: 75.

**Diastatic activity of—**

- bacteria, 1: 179.
- nasturtium, 20: 459.

**Dicalcium silicate on acid soil, 10: 57.****Dicyandiamid, action of, on plant growth, 17: 487.****Dilatometer method in moisture studies, 11: 133; 23: 120.**

**Diphenylamin** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 187.

**Dolomite—**

disintegration of, at various depths, 20: 403.

effect on—

calcium leachings from lysimeters, 16: 331.

magnesium leachings from lysimeters, 16: 336.

potassium liberation, 16: 217.

sulfate outgo from soil, 16: 1.

**Drainage—**

losses of limestone, 4: 50.

tanks for greenhouse experiments, 4: 51.

water—

calcium content in, as affected by fertilizer treatment, 9: 241; 17: 249.

calcium in, 4: 50.

nitrogen in, 9: 57.

sulfur in, 15: 154.

**Dried blood—see also Ammonification of—**

availability, 19: 467.

comparison of, nitrogen with other nitrogen salts, 7: 122.

decomposition of, 17: 298.

effect on—

microorganisms in the soil, 17: 375.

nitrate determination, 4: 198.

protozoa, 2: 172.

production of nitric nitrogen from, 7: 187.

proteins in, 1: 511.

**Dynamometer** tests on draft of plows, 21: 277; 25: 18.

**E**

**Earthworms**, influence of, on soil, 20: 362.

**Electrical** resistance of sand with sodium chloride and sodium carbonate, 9: 271.

**Electrodialysis** of—

feldspar, 25: 300.

soils and the Mattson cell, 24: 291.

**Electrokinetic** behavior of the aluminosilicates, 25: 289.

**Electrolysis** of suspensions, 5: 343.

**Electrolytes—**

coagulation of clay by, 1: 594.

effect on—

colloidal precipitates, 3: 425.

migration velocity of clay colloid, 18: 405.

muck colloids, 1: 594.

**Electrometric** titration of plant juices, 7: 487.

**Enzymes—**

actinomyces, 8: 185.

bacterial, 1: 179.

book review, 23: 81.

fungus, 6: 150.

relation to protein decomposition, 1: 103.

**F**

**Feldspars—**

changes in, due to weathering, discussion, 8: 49.

potash from, for plants, 12: 37.

potassium liberation from, 16: 389.

**Ferrification** in soils, 2: 549.

**Fertilizer—see also Fertilizers.**

aluminum salts as a, and stimulant, 10: 160.

ammonium sulfate, 7: 122.

bacterial soil, preparation, 17: 19.

bone meal, for soybeans, 25: 314.

calcined, phosphatic, limestone as, 14: 265.

calcium nitrate, 5: 83.

calcium silicate as, 14: 354.

carbon-dioxide as, 22: 218.

cell stimulation and, 20: 361.

dried blood, 5: 83; 7: 122; *see also* Ammonification, Nitrification dried blood.

fish as, 4: 286.

floats as, 14: 354.

garbage tankage availability of, 21: 59.

manganese as, 22: 442.

nutrients in water and soil cultures, 19: 172.

requirement of soil, determination of, 20: 361; 22: 218.

response of soils to, relation to nutrients in soil solution, 16: 442.

salts, effect on—

growth and nitrogen content of some legumes, 11: 435.

size of particles, 18: 399.

soil solution, 17: 216.

vanillin decomposition, 10: 240.

slag as, 14: 353.

sodium chloride as, 7: 126.

sulfur as, 11: 60; 14: 435; 19: 82; 25: 447.

treatments and germination, 5: 459.

treatments, changes in cylinder soils due to, 18: 31.

urea as, 3: 185; 17: 492; 21: 59.



**Fertilizers**—*see also* Fertilizer.

acid, influence of, on crop growth, 17: 437.

alkaline, influence of, on crop growth, 17: 437.

ammonium phosphate, comparison with other nitrogenous, 5: 5.

ammonium sulfate—*see also* Ammonium sulfate.

bibliography, 5: 468.

comparison of, with sodium nitrate, 7: 123.

superiority of, 5: 86.

with and without lime, 5: 21.

borax in, effect on corn and potatoes, 11: 369; 12: 79.

chemical, physiological reaction of, 22: 217.

effect on—

aluminum precipitation, 13: 103.

blueberries, 10: 309.

botanical composition of pastures, 7: 161.

carbon-dioxide evolution in soil, 23: 430.

composition of soybeans, 6: 75.

cranberry land, 12: 183.

germination of seeds, 23: 335.

heat of wetting of different plant materials, 22: 33.

inoculation of legumes, 6: 75.

nitrogen conservation in soils, 18: 87.

plant composition, 9: 240.

potassium liberation from feldspars, 16: 389.

soil respiration, 23: 427.

soybean oil content, 6: 99.

water relationships in plants, 22: 32.

methods of applying, 21: 7, 127; 24: 9.

mineral, effect on—

nodulation of soybeans, 17: 439.

plow draft, 21: 281.

Neubauer method for determining requirement of, 23: 199.

nitrogen—*see also* Nitrogen.

carriers of, in, 9: 487.

legumes as, 12: 365.

mineral and organic, comparison, 9: 377; 19: 66.

nitrifiability of, 12: 343, 352; 23: 140.

Rehmsdor's, 19: 81.

nitrogen, availability—

ammonification and nitrification test for, 3: 63.

**Fertilizers**—

nitrogen availability—(*continued*)

field experiments on, 9: 371; 19: 57.

in arid soils, 2: 575.

of various nitrogenous, 5: 20.

nitrogen, effect on—

bacterial activities of the soil, 4: 452.

cranberries, 8: 483.

plant species on abandoned land, 4: 286.

soil reaction, 5: 20, 51.

organic and biochemical composition of soil, 20: 353.

phosphate—*see also* Phosphorus, Phosphate.

for cranberries, 8: 483.

insoluble, with sodium nitrate and ammonium sulfate 7: 123.

phosphatic, recovery of phosphorus from, 17: 45.

phosphorus—

availability of various sources of, 5: 56; 17: 39.

relation to composition of plants, 9: 240.

rock phosphate-sulfur composts, use of, 4: 337.

phosphorus, effect on—

crop yield, 17: 327.

nitrogen recovery, 17: 327.

potassium, sulfate and muriate, a comparison, 16: 107; *see also* Potassium.

potassium, effect on—

crop yield, 17: 327.

nitrogen recovery, 17: 327.

relation to solubility laws, 15: 84.

sodium nitrate, 3: 183; 5: 83; 7: 122; *see also* Sodium nitrate.

sodium nitrate, comparison of, with ammonium sulfate, 7: 123.

sodium nitrate, effect on—

blueberries, 10: 309.

buckwheat, 24: 85.

calcium carbonate leaching, 17: 253.

plant composition, 9: 240.

triangle scheme for study of, 4: 382, 7: 162; 14: 400.

**Fibrin**, nitrogen distribution of hydrolyzed, 5: 163.

**Flax**, nitrogen effects on growth of, 21: 303.

**Flocculation** as affected by sodium salts, 1: 588.

**Fluorine**, presence of, in soils, 15: 8.

**Formaldehyde** for root-nematodes, 4: 487; *see also* Soil fumigation.

**Formalin** sterilization of soils by, 3: 527.

**Freezing—**

point-lowering—  
concentration effect of soil solution on,  
9: 219.

method for determining, 3: 113.

method for measuring soluble material  
in soils, 7: 253.

point-lowering, as affected by—

freezing and thawing, 11: 35, 132.

glycerin and alcohol treatment, 13: 48.

peat treatment of alkali soil, 17: 406.

sulfur treatment, 17: 406; 18: 112.

various salts, 9: 418.

point-lowering of—

alkali soil extracts, 17: 406.

clay loam at various moisture contents,  
11: 35.

plants, study on, 9: 217.

roots and tops of plants, 3: 113; 9:  
219.

soil solution, variously displaced, 13:  
48.

soils at various depths, 9: 418.

water liberation from soils by, 11: 133.

**Fungus—see also Soil fungi, Ammonification.**

activities in soil, 2: 103; 16: 207.

as affected by—

chemical composition of soil, 2: 17.

cropping, 19: 423; 22: 379.

mechanical composition of soil, 2: 17.

organic matter, 2: 4.

associative action with bacteria, 2: 44.

carbon dioxide production by, 5: 235,  
359.

drying effects on, 3: 60.

effect on biochemical processes in soil, 24:  
149.

imperfecti in soils, 3: 580.

infection by, of sterilized seeds, 7: 33.

isolation of, from soil, 16: 208.

media—

Cook's, 1: 382.

for purification of, 2: 113.

reaction of, influencing number, 2: 272.

morphological study, 2: 139.

pentosan destruction by, 15: 479.

phosphorus made available by, 13: 170;  
16: 211.

sulfur oxidation by, 13: 170; 16: 212.

taxonomy of, 2: 115; 16: 208.

**Fungous** material, decomposition of, in  
soil, 17: 298; 22: 430.

**G**

**Gelatin** liquefaction of, by actinomycetes, 8:  
86.

**Germination—**

fertilizer effects on, discussion, 5: 75.

osmotic pressure effects on, 15: 230.

sterilization effects on seed, 6: 1.

**Glaciation** effects on solubility of soil sub-  
stances, 10: 226.

**Glinka, K. D.**, an obituary note, 25: 1.

**Glucose**, effect on—

nitrate determination in Devarda's  
method, 10: 338.

vanillin decomposition, 10: 244.

**Glycocoll—**

effect on nitrate determination, 4: 198.

in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 187.

**Grain**, iron, chlorine and sulfur content of,  
19: 325.

**Green Manure—see also Manure.**

cowpeas as, 12: 327.

decomposition, 9: 27.

effect on—

alkali soil, 25: 444.

soil flora, 16: 476.

soil reaction, 9: 27.

humification of, 3: 517.

humus in, 3: 519.

nitrogen availability of, 22: 253.

relation to—

nitrification, 12: 327. ^

nitrogen fixation, 4: 1.

**Greensand marl—**

potassium availability from, 14: 307.

sulfur-floats-mixtures, 15: 93.

**Guanidin—**

carbonate as toxic agent to wheat, 3: 343.

carbonate in sterile cultures for plants, 3:  
186.

nitrate in sterile cultures for plants, 3:  
188.

**Guanin** in sterile culture for plants, 3: 186.

**Guanyl urea**, sulfate action of, on plants, 17:  
487.

**Gypsum**, effect on—*see also* Calcium sulfate.

alkali soils, 13: 130; 25: 444.

ammonification, 9: 446; 15: 141.

azofication, 9: 446; 15: 143.

bacterial activities in the soil, 9: 437;  
19: 417.

composition of soybeans, 6: 113.

crops, 9: 440; 15: 146.

**Gypsum**, effect on—(*continued*)

- hydrogen-ion concentration of soils, 12: 442.
- lime requirement, 12: 440.
- nitrification, 9: 446; 15: 142.
- nitrogen content of soil and crops, 9: 457; 15: 140.
- organic matter, 15: 143.
- phosphate availability, 13: 363; 15: 138.
- potassium removed by crops, 22: 335.
- potassium solubility, 9: 457; 15: 138; 16: 134.
- potassium solubility in soils, 22: 335.
- protein content of crops, 15: 146.
- radicicola, 9: 452.
- sodium carbonate reactions in alkali soils and, 13: 132.
- soil reaction, 12: 433; 15: 151.
- soils, 15: 137.

**H****Hardpan**, *see* Soil hardpan.**Heat**, effect on—*see also* Temperature.

- acid-salt and neutral-salt forming bases, 25: 243.
- ammonification, 2: 370; 5: 207.
- associative action of bacteria and fungi, 2: 55.
- bacterial numbers, 2: 370; 9: 331.
- nitrate nitrogen in soil, 5: 208.
- reaction between lime-water and acid soils, 9: 151.
- soluble non-protein nitrogen in soil, 5: 208.
- sterilization of soils and, 7: 1.

**Heat of reaction** between gels and hydroxides, 23: 243.**Heat of Wetting**—

- as affected by—
  - fertilizers, 22: 33.
  - treatments, 22: 31.
- colloidal material in soils, determination by, 19: 153.
- muck, 18: 183.
- organic soil, 18: 182.
- relation to—
  - bases in colloids, 20: 333.
  - chemical composition of soil, 20: 333.
  - volume of contraction of soil, 23: 122.
- sand particles, 21: 483.
- soil colloids, factors influencing, 19: 477; 20: 329.
- soil in different liquids, 18: 182; 23: 244.

**Heat of Wetting**—(*continued*)

- soils as influenced by colloids, 18: 101.
- soils dried at different temperatures, 20: 67.
- soils saturated with different bases, 20: 331.
- studies, 18: 118; 23: 392.

**Hemoglobin** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 188.**Hilgard**, Eugene Woldemar, a sketch of his life and work, 1: 1.**Hilgard** hot hydrochloric acid extraction method, 13: 347.**Hippuric acid**, effect on nitrate determination, 4: 198.**Histidine** in soils, 1: 523.**Histograms** of textural composition of soils, 17: 484.**Hopkins** potassium nitrate extract method for soils, 13: 347.**Hydrocyanic acid**, appearance of, in sorghum, 17: 316.**Hydrolysis** of proteins, 1: 515.**Humic acid**, inversion of sugar by, 5: 341.**Humification**—

- humus increase due to, 3: 7.
- problems of, 3: 515.

**Humus**—*see also* Organic matter.

- alkali soluble composition, 22: 70.
- artificial, preparation of, 16: 290.
- ash, analyses of, 3: 5, 101.
- composition of, from limed and unlimed soils, 22: 70.
- content of chernozem soils, 25: 469.
- content of soil as guide to fertility, 3: 515.
- formation and decomposition, 22: 213, 323, 395, 421.
- formation from cellulose, 16: 292.
- from—
  - alfalfa hay, 3: 102; 24: 313.
  - black peat, 3: 102.
  - brown peat, 3: 102.
  - clover, 24: 313.
  - grass from brown peat bog, 3: 102.
  - muck, 3: 102.
  - oak leaves, 3: 102.
  - oats, 3: 102.
  - sphagnum covered peat, 3: 102.
  - straw, 19: 111; 24: 313.
  - sweet fern leaves, 3: 102.
- in—
  - ammonia extracts, 6: 374.
  - arid and semi-arid soils, 1: 256.

**Humus—**

## in—(continued)

leachings from different soils and vegetable materials, 3: 104.

loess soil, 1: 239.

## methods of—

estimating, 2: 398; 22: 221.

extraction with sodium hydroxide or ammonium hydroxide, 1: 287; 2: 429.

## nitrogen—

in, and plant materials, comparison, 2: 434.

in loess soils, 1: 239, 251.

in soils, 2: 395.

ratio to carbon, 1: 247.

origin and nature of, 22: 123, 221, 323, 421.

phosphoric acid, data on, 3: 99.

potash from prepared, 19: 110.

production from manure, 3: 1.

ratio to humus ash, 3: 107.

## relation to—

acids in, 4: 142.

arid and semi-arid soils, 1: 256.

carbon, 2: 395, 437.

**Hydrochloric acid—**

## effect on—

ammonia absorption, 2: 321.

base absorption capacity of soils, 17: 269.

phosphorus solubility, 19: 401.

## extraction of soils—

method for analyses, 5: 412; 25: 25.

nitrogen in, 5: 482.

soluble non-protein nitrogen in, 6: 442.

with 0.2N, 8: 317; 19: 401.

method of determining absorbed cations, 16: 473; 25: 240.

treatment of soil, 25: 150.

treatment of soil colloidal material, 25: 346.

**Hydrogen electrode—**

Clark, vessel and soil measurements, 13: 323.

for the determination of reaction of plant juices, 9: 343.

potentials of *B. coli*, 9: 207.

**Hydrogen-ion concentration—see also Soils H-ion concentration.**

apparatus, 8: 219; 9: 119, 343; 10: 467.

**Hydrogen-ion concentration—(continued)**

## as affected by—

gypsum, 12: 442.

replaceable hydrogen, 21: 186.

sulfur in soil, 12: 197.

buffers for adjusting, 3: 549.

color standards for, measurements, 9: 129.

## determination—

colorimetric, 6: 224; 9: 115; 23: 24.

colorimetric and electrometric, a comparison, 16: 86.

comparison of methods of, 6: 225; 20: 291.

electrometric, 6: 220.

methods of, 3: 549; 10: 467; 20: 285.

of plant juices, method, 7: 488; 8: 219.

quinhydrone electrode, 21: 167; 24: 453.

without buffers, 9: 115.

## effect on—

absorption by soil colloids, 14: 449.

adsorption of bases, 17: 414.

aluminum in soils, 15: 133.

aluminum liberation from clay, 17: 417.

*Bacillus radicola*, 20: 49.

calcium absorbed by colloidal clay, 24: 365.

calcium-acid phosphate adsorption by gels of aluminum, ion, and silica, 14: 3.

calcium liberation from clay, 17: 418.

electrical charge on colloidal clay, 18: 401.

exchange of bases, 17: 414.

growth of barley seedlings, 3: 547.

iron liberation from clay, 17: 417.

isoelectric point of silica-aluminum system, 25: 295.

magnesium liberation from clay, 17: 418.

nitrate nitrogen in soils, 14: 9.

plant growth, 24: 1.

potassium absorption by clay, 17: 416.

potato scab, 6: 229.

silica liberation from clay, 17: 417.

soils—see Soils hydrogen-ion concentration.

soybean bacteria, 13: 275.

importance of, control in physico-chemical study of soils, 17: 411.

indicator solutions for, measurements, 9: 127.

**Hydrogen-ion concentration—(continued)**

- lime requirement and, by the Veitch method, 9: 253, 261.
- method for adjusting, in soils, 10: 302.
- nutrient solution, 10: 481; 15: 375.
- nutrient solution, as affected by growth of plants, 3: 558; 12: 69.
- plant juices, 7: 470, 487; 8: 217, 227; 9: 341.
- relation to—
  - calcium content of wheat and oats, 15: 375.
  - hydrolysis of ethyl acetate, 15: 99.
  - lime-requirement, 12: 197; 13: 7; 18: 49, 65.
  - oats growth, 15: 375.
  - organic matter, 12: 151.
  - phosphorus availability, 17: 466.
  - plant growth in water cultures with aluminum salts, 13: 23.
  - soil series and types, 18: 65.
  - three-salt solutions, 11: 325.
  - wheat plant growth in nutrient solutions, 12: 69; 15: 375.

**Hydrogen ions**, method of determining replaceable, 21: 183.

**Hydrometer—**

- method for determining soil colloids, 23: 319.
- method for studying soils, 25: 365.
- method for the mechanical analysis of soils, 23: 343.

**Hydroxyl-ion concentration**, effect on barley, 3: 547.

**Hygroscopic coefficient—**

- climate effects on, 1: 9.
- determination of, 13: 197.
- from different soil levels, 3: 14.
- of loess soils, 1: 197.
- ratio of water content to, 7: 320.
- relation to—
  - mechanical analyses of soils, 4: 463.
  - moisture equivalent, 4: 463; 19: 259.
  - vapor pressure, 11: 427.

## I

**Inoculation—**

- alfalfa, effect on dry weight, 3: 90.
- peas, field tests, 11: 479.
- soybean, effect on—
  - composition, 6: 81, 86.
  - nitrogen content, 1: 519; 7: 455.

**Invertase activity of bacteria**, 1: 179.

**Iron—**

- adsorption and replacement in colloidal oxide of, 15: 157.
- adsorption of, by soils, 22: 163.
- amount of, in plants grown in soil and water cultures, 19: 192.
- antagonistic action of, and calcium salts, 10: 77.
- availability of, 16: 273.
- carbonate, effect on ammonification, 2: 462.
- chloride, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 462.
  - hydrolysis of fibrin, 5: 163.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
- climatic effect on, in soils, 1: 34.
- colloidal, use of, to clear soil extracts, 9: 132.
- colloids, prevalence of, in soils, 17: 404.
- effect on wheat in nutrient solution, 11: 93.
- gel—
  - heat of reaction of, and hydroxides, 23: 243.
  - replacement reactions in, 15: 164.
- gel, adsorption of—
  - calcium acid phosphate by, 14: 2.
  - calcium nitrate, 15: 158.
  - nitrates, 15: 158.
  - potassium sulfate, nitrate, phosphate, 14: 454, 455.
  - phosphate, 15: 159.
  - sulfates, 15: 158.
- hydroxide—
  - absorption of calcium sulfate by, 19: 127.
  - effect on nutrient solutions, 7: 212.
- in—
  - chernozem, 1: 432.
  - drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 176.
  - grain grown under irrigation, 19: 325.
  - salt extracts of acid soils, 16: 202.
  - soils of Nebraska, 1: 418.
- methods for determining, 2: 551; 19: 185.
- microorganisms, importance of, in the solution and precipitation of, 24: 381.
- mobility of, 16: 273.
- nitrate, effect on ammonification, 2: 462.
- oxidation and reduction of, 24: 398.
- phosphate—
  - agricultural value of, 13: 355.
  - nutrient solution for wheat with, 11: 93.

**Iron—(continued)**

- pyrites, oxidation of, by sulfur oxidizing organisms, 14: 135.
- relation to—
  - acid soils, 25: 345.
  - chlorosis, 22: 437.
  - heat of wetting, 19: 481.
- removal from soil colloids, 25: 346.
- salts, solubility of, 25: 470.
- salts, effect on—
  - phosphorus recovery from soils, 18: 469.
  - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 149.
  - soil acidity, 10: 187.
- solubility, as affected by—
  - nitrification, 7: 194.
  - sulfonation, 7: 194.
- sulfate as fertilizer, 7: 130.
- sulfate, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 462.
  - calcium and magnesium leachings, 16: 452, 457.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - nodulation of soybeans, 17: 455.
- sulfate, ferrous—
  - effect on soil solution, 13: 55.
  - for wheat in nutrient solution, 11: 93.
- transformations in nature, 24: 381.
- water soluble, in soils, 15: 110.

**Irrigation—**

- cultivation and, 19: 37.
- effect on—
  - carbon, phosphorus, calcium, and magnesium of the soil, 19: 87.
  - iron, sulfur, and chlorine content of grain, 19: 325.
- moisture properties of soils under, 8: 303.
- water, method for chemical analyses of, 25: 351.
- water, ways of increasing duty of, 14: 377.

**K**

- Kaolin**, electrolyte, effect on, 23: 225.
- Kaolinization**, character of, 10: 164.

**L****Laterite—**

- colloidal material from, 13: 428.
- color of, relation to iron content, 13: 429.
- soils, composition of, 13: 427.
- Laterization** in northern climates, 10: 164.

**Leaching effect on—**

- availability of rock phosphate, 2: 235.
- soil acidity, 13: 461.

**Legume—see also Bacteria nodule-forming.**

- bacteriophage in nodules of, plants, 17: 434.
- crops, effect on succeeding crops, 22: 355.
- cultures, methods of testing, 6: 54, 69.
- nitrogen for non-legumes, 21: 253.
- nodules, effect of sulfur on, 14: 252.
- sap, acidity, composition, and buffer values of, and non-legume plants, 15: 197.
- seeds, longevity of *B. radicola* on, 7: 217.

**Legumes—**

- buffer system of, 15: 181.
- composition of some, 3: 78.
- cross-inoculation of, 6: 397.
- growth of, on subsoils, 3: 34.
- inoculated, as nitrogenous fertilizers, 12: 365.
- maintaining the soil nitrogen by, review, 10: 249.
- nitrogen changes in soils during growth of, 9: 309.
- nitrogenous content of some, as influenced by fertilizers, 11: 435.
- rotation, nitrogen balance in soils with, 9: 91.

**Leguminosae**, lack of nodule-formation in a subfamily of, 20: 165.**Leucite** as source of potassium, 19: 42.**Light**, effect on—

- potassium availability, 19: 109.
- reaction of plant juices, 9: 364.
- seed germination, 7: 1.
- soil moisture, 22: 233.

**Lime—see also Calcium, Calcium oxide, Limestone.**

- accumulation of, in Texas soils, 23: 478.
- availability and nitrification, 4: 330.
- burnt—
  - carbonation of, in soils, 7: 325.
  - fixation of calcium-magnesium from, in soils, 22: 109.
  - transformation of, in soils, 22: 215; 24: 475.
- calcium silicate as a source of, 18: 479; 21: 443.
- cylinder experiments, 6: 157; 7: 249.
- determination in peat, 1: 505; 5: 213.
- drainage, 4: 51.

**Lime—(continued)****effect on—**

- availability of insoluble phosphates, 13: 358.
- availability of nutrients, 19: 270.
- beets, 7: 280.
- calcium content of soil solution, 17: 216.
- carbon dioxide evolution, 1: 86; 5: 367.
- chemical composition of soil, 13: 337.
- chemico-physical properties of soil, 20: 356.
- crop yield, 4: 441; 14: 374.
- evaporation, capillary rise, and distribution of water in soils, 9: 409.
- hydrogen-ion concentration of plant juices, 7: 470.
- lettuce, 7: 280.
- nitrate outgo, 22: 21.
- nitric nitrogen, 4: 187.
- nitrification, 8: 243; 12: 332; 21: 446; *see also* Nitrification.
- nitrogen content of corn, 1: 489.
- nitrogen content of legumes, 11: 445.
- nitrogen content of soybeans, 4: 71; 7: 457.
- nitrogen losses, 1: 90.
- nodulation of soybeans, 17: 445.
- non-protein nitrogen in soils, 5: 371.
- organic matter in soils, 1: 89; 18: 201; 23: 107.
- organic nitrogen forms in soils, 22: 69.
- oxidizing power of soil, 10: 29.
- physical and biological condition of soil, 22: 214.
- phosphate availability in ferruginous soils, 17: 463.
- phosphorus liberation, 7: 128.
- plant behavior, 13: 337.
- plow draft, 21: 281.
- potassium solubility, 16: 134.
- soil organisms, 19: 271; 21: 443.
- soil solution 17: 216.
- soil sulfur conservation, 4: 231.
- soybean composition, 6: 89.
- sulfate formation in soils, 21: 449.
- sulfate outgo, 22: 21.
- sulfate retention, 19: 125.
- factor in permanent soil improvement, 9: 83.
- from coral sand, 4: 330.
- hydrated, persistence of, in soils, 7: 343.

**Lime—(continued)****in—**

- chernozem soils, 1: 432.
- drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 181.
- soils, 1: 32, 43, 413; 20: 356.
- magnesia ratio, 11: 182; 15: 427.
- magnesium and calcium, effect on soil, 13: 337; 18: 169; 21: 377; 23: 175.
- materials, reaction of, and lime requirement, 11: 261.
- nature of, in soil, Hungarian method for determining, 19: 39.
- relation to—
  - chemical transformations, 22: 61.
  - chlorosis, 22: 437.
  - climate, 1: 32, 43.
  - phosphorus availability, 17: 466.
  - physical conditions of soil, 22: 61, 71.
- requirement—*see also* Calcium, Limestone.
- bacterial activity and, a correlation, 4: 433.
- definition, 4: 437; 5: 179.
- determined by the plant and by the chemist, 17: 279.
- method, modification of old methods, 6: 42.
- methods, a comparison, 6: 35; 16: 79.
- of plants, 5: 179.
- plant-physiological viewpoint on, 20: 355.
- muck soil, as influenced by aeration, 9: 77.
- requirement, as affected by—
  - carbohydrates added to soils, 6: 430.
  - carbon-dioxide, 3: 284.
  - dehydration of soils, 25: 179.
  - fineness of limestone applied, 4: 25.
  - grinding, 1: 95.
  - gypsum, 12: 440.
  - heating the soil, 9: 152.
  - lime, 15: 325.
  - lime treatment, magnesium or calcium, 9: 110.
  - nitrogenous materials added to soils, 6: 430.
  - sulfur application to the soil, 12: 197.
- requirement, methods for determining—
  - Albert, 4: 119.
  - Azotobacter, 4: 145.
  - Baumann and Gully, 4: 155.
  - Bizzel and Lyon, 4: 120; 16: 200.
  - Carr, 16: 201.
  - Comber, 16: 198.



**Lime—**

requirement, methods for determining—  
(continued)

Daikuhara, 4: 117.

discussion, 16: 196.

Hollemann, 16: 201.

Hopkins, 4: 117; 16: 200.

Hutchinson and MacLennan, 4: 119;  
16: 200.

Jones, 11: 354; 16: 200.

Jones and H-ion concentration, a comparison, 16: 79.

Jones and Veitch, comparison, 11: 354.

Lipman, J. G., 4: 122.

Loew, 4: 121; 16: 200.

potassium thiocyanate, 23: 167.

Tacke, 4: 116.

Tacke-Süchting, 4: 150.

vacuum, 3: 280.

Veitch, 4: 118; 9: 153; 13: 10.

Veitch, Truog, and H-ion concentration, a comparison, 9: 253, 261; 13: 12.

requirement, relation to—

ammonia absorption, 2: 317.

ammonia retention, 6: 405.

degree of response by plants, theory, 5: 183.

hydrogen-ion concentration, 12: 197;

13: 7; 16: 79, 199; 18: 49, 65; 19: 72.

loss on ignition, 19: 50.

organic matter, 12: 148.

reaction of lime materials, 11: 261.

replaceable hydrogen, 23: 131.

soil acidity, 5: 181; 11: 272.

soil-calcium carbonate equilibrium, 25: 429.

soil reaction, 13: 344; 22: 216.

soil series and types, 18: 65.

soils-content of bases, 3: 279.

various soil treatments, 12: 140.

soil acidity and, 17: 465.

sulfur effects and, 11: 60.

water, reaction of, with acid soils, 9: 151.

**Limestone—see also Lime, Calcium.**

calcined phosphatic, as a fertilizer, 14: 265.

calcium magnesium fixation in soils from, 22: 109.

comparative value of various forms of, 7: 273.

coral, use of, to neutralize acidity, 4: 332.

**Limestone—(continued)**

decomposition as affected by ammonium sulfate, 22: 65.

disintegration of, at various depths, 20: 403.

dolomitic, versus calcium, 7: 273; 13: 337.

effect on—

acidity of subsurface soil, 7: 275.

bacteriological factors in soil, 4: 19.

chemical factors in soil, 4: 19.

crop yield, 4: 19.

nitrification, 4: 332.

nitrogen yield, 15: 310, 313, 316, 319.

organic matter decomposition, 19: 267.

soybeans, 25: 314.

efficiency of a ton of, 7: 276.

fineness, effect on—

acidity, 7: 274; 15: 300.

loss of, 7: 274.

fineness of division experiments, 4: 19;

6: 274; 19: 267; 20: 410; 22: 62.

in carbon dioxide saturated water, 13: 340.

magnesia versus non-magnesia, 9: 92; 13: 337; 15: 307.

residual, in treated soil, 7: 276; 22: 62.

slag and, a comparison, 14: 359.

solubility of, as related to its physical properties, 15: 293.

**Liming—see also Lime, Limestone.**

delayed effects of, 24: 147.

effect on—

acidity of plant juices, 9: 346.

soil solution, 17: 215.

relation to—

calcium solubility in soils, 19: 441.

salt movement in soils, 19: 459.

**Linseed meal** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 189.

**Lithium—**

absorption of, in soils, 17: 262.

determination of, in soils, 15: 5.

**Loess—see Soils.**

**Loew** 10 per cent hydrochloric acid method for extracting soil, 13: 347.

**Lupines—**

composition of, 3: 79.

juice, H-ion concentration of, 7: 470.

phosphorus requirements of, 20: 254.

salt requirements of, 21: 1.

**Lysimeter—**

carbonation studies in field, tanks, 7: 370.

concentration of, drainage water, 16: 427.

**Lysimeter—(continued)**

- equipment, description, 4: 231.
- movable, for soil studies, 20: 465.
- pitless, equipment, 11: 207.
- potassium leachings, 8: 337.
- studies 15: 439; 16: 217, 427, 449; 17: 65; 19: 309; 21: 377; 22: 21; 23: 175; 24: 51, 475.
- sulfate outgo from, leachings, 16: 1.

**Lysine** in soils, 1: 522.

**M****Magnesia—**

- effect on—
  - outgo of calcium and magnesium, 21: 377; 23: 175.
  - sulfur conservation in soil, 4: 231.
  - toxicity in relation to silica, 19: 331.
- lime ratio in soils, 11: 182; 15: 427.

**Magnesite**, effect on sulfate outgo from soil, 16: 35.

**Magnesium—**

- absorption of, by plants, 16: 228.
- calcium and, compared with the soluble calcium in 0.04 N carbonated water, 17: 225.
- calcium ratio in nutrient solutions, 2: 235, 245.
- carbonate—
  - absorption by, 2: 100.
  - toxicity induced by, 15: 450.
- carbonate, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 458.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - nitrification, 4: 213.
- oxidation of ammonium sulfate, 17: 60.
- potassium leachings, 8: 346.
- sulfate leachings, 16: 24; 17: 74.
- sulfur oxidation, 1: 359.
- chloride, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 458.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
- climatic effects on soil, 1: 32, 43.
- content of 34 species of plants, 10: 52.
- cylinder soils, 18: 47.
- extraction of, by various solvents, 13: 348.
- hydroxide, effect on sulfate solubility, 17: 74.
- in—
  - chernozem soil, 1: 432.
  - drift soil of Minnesota, 11: 182.
  - Nebraska soil, 1: 415; 2: 384.

**Magnesium—****in—(continued)**

- rainwater, 15: 205.
  - Wyoming alkali soil, 4: 208.
  - irrigation effects on soil, 19: 94.
  - leachings, as affected by—
    - calcium oxide, 16: 457.
    - ferrous sulfate, 16: 457.
    - magnesium oxide, 16: 456.
    - pyrite, 16: 458.
    - sulfur, 16: 459.
  - leachings from soils, 16: 327, 456.
  - manure effects on soil, 19: 94.
  - movement of, within the soil, 6: 287.
  - nitrate, effects on ammonification, 2: 458.
  - oxide, effect on sulfate outgo from lysimeters, 16: 23.
  - salts, effect on—
    - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 147.
    - plant chlorosis, 22: 437.
    - potassium liberation from soils, 16: 217.
    - sulfate outgo from lysimeters, 16: 1, 159; 23: 175.
  - silicate, effect on crops, 14: 237.
  - solubility, as affected by—
    - ammonium carbonate, 15: 447.
    - carbonated water, 15: 444.
    - hydrochloric acid, 15: 448.
    - nitrification, 7: 193.
  - sulfate in sand cultures, 2: 207.
  - sulfate, effect on—
    - ammonification, 2: 458.
    - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
    - nitrification, 4: 212.
  - toxicity, the transient nature of, 15: 427.
  - water soluble, in Wagner pots and lysimeters, 15: 433.
- Malt** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 189.
- Manganese—**
- as an active base in soils, 25: 357.
  - carbonate, effect on—
    - ammonification, 2: 460.
    - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - chloride, effect on—
    - ammonification, 2: 460.
    - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - effect on—
    - ammonification, 2: 67.
    - nitrification, 2: 67.
    - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 148.
    - plant growth, 7: 132; 19: 85.

**Manganese—**

- effect on—(*continued*)
  - soil acidity, 10: 187.
  - soil phosphate, 25: 152.
- green solution of, 23: 170.
- in—
  - acid soils, 5: 172; 8: 69.
  - cylinder soils, 18: 47.
  - Nebraska soils, 1: 420.
- method for determining, 1: 412; 22: 441; 23: 168.
- nitrate, effect on ammonification, 2: 460.
- precipitation reaction of, 23: 170.
- relation of, to lime induced chlorosis, 22: 437.
- solubility, as affected by—
  - nitrification, 7: 193.
  - sulfonation, 7: 193.
- sulfate, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 460.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - nodulation of soybeans, 17: 455.
  - soybean composition, 6: 114.

**Mannite—**

- breaking down of, by soils, 15: 329.
- decomposition in soils, 17: 379.
- nitrogen fixation with, 4: 9.
- potassium permanganate method in determining decomposition of, 15: 362.

**Manure—see also Green manure.**

- ammonia preservation methods in, review, 7: 284.
- apparatus for determining ammonia losses from, 7: 287.
- barnyard, effect on—
  - carbonation of calcium hydroxide, 7: 355.
  - nitrification in soil, 8: 243; 24: 81.
  - nitrogen conservation, 18: 96.
  - organic matter residue, 20: 319.
  - soil treated with caustic lime, 20: 313.
- calcium sulfate as preservative, 7: 288.
- cellulose decomposition with stable, 18: 185.
- composition changes in the soil due to, 7: 259.
- composition of, fermented with sulfur, 11: 57.
- cow—
  - carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
  - effect on protozoa, 2: 172.
  - humus from, 3: 518.
  - in sulfur-rock phosphate mixtures, 4: 270.

**Manure—(*continued*)**

- effect on—
    - alkali soils, 25: 444.
    - carbon, phosphorus, calcium and magnesium of soil, 19: 87.
    - carbon-dioxide evolution from soils, 23: 430.
    - crop yields on soil types of Iowa, 14: 373.
    - plant growth, 24: 95.
    - plow draft, 21: 278.
    - soil solution, 17: 216.
    - soybeans, 25: 314.
  - experiments, 4: 79.
  - fermentation, as affected by—
    - sulfates, 4: 79.
    - sulfur, 4: 79.
  - fermentation, effect on—
    - composition, 7: 268.
    - nitrogen changes, 4: 79.
    - phosphorus content, 4: 79.
  - hen, humus from, 3: 518.
  - horse—
    - carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
    - humus from, 3: 518.
    - in sulfur-rock phosphate mixtures, 4: 270.
  - liquid, experiments with, 4: 86.
  - pig, humus from, 3: 518.
  - preservation of, with rock phosphate sulfur mixtures, 10: 320.
  - production of humus from, 3: 1.
  - relation to numbers of bacteria, 2: 367.
  - residual effect of 40 years' continuous use of, 18: 201; 20: 313.
  - residual effects of forty years' treatment, 22: 61.
  - rotted, carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
  - sheep, humus from, 3: 518.
  - solid, experiments with, 4: 80.
  - soluble organic matter in, 7: 268.
  - stable, inhibition of injurious effects by, 7: 105.
  - sulfur and rock phosphate composts, 4: 269; 11: 52.
  - whale, nitrification of, 12: 342.
- Mathematical** formula used in soil variability, 17: 345.
- Melanin** nitrogen in soils, 1: 526.
- Microbiological—**
- activities in presence of dicyandiamid and guanlyl urea sulfate, 17: 495.
  - activity and crop yields, a correlation, 17: 157.

**Microorganisms**—see also Soil microorganisms, Bacteria, Fungi, Actinomyces.  
 activity of, as influenced by sodium nitrate, 4: 388.  
 alfalfa decomposition by, 22: 395.  
 fertilization, effect on numbers of, 14: 321.  
 humus formation by, 22: 421.  
 iron precipitation and solution by, 24: 381.  
 number of, as affected by cropping, 19: 423.  
 number of, in soil, method for study, 14: 283; 25: 37.  
 nutrients in agar-agar for, 2: 256.  
 oxidation of sulfur by, 2: 506; 5: 251; 12: 476, 487; 13: 116, 161, 329.  
 pentosan destruction by, 15: 479.  
 straw decomposition by, 22: 395.  
 zinc sulfide oxidation by, 14: 459.

**Minerals**—  
 nature of the silicate, 8: 276.  
 potassium bearing, as source of potassium for plants, 8: 269.  
 reaction of, after extraction with carbon-dioxide, 5: 151.  
 solubility of, as affected by decaying organic matter, 8: 289.

**Mitscherlich**—  
 fertilizer requirement by the, method, 22: 218.  
 formula, discussion of, 17: 360.

**Moisture**—see also Soil moisture, Water.  
 content of sea-sand, effect on barley, 5: 427.  
 content of various soils and germination of barley, 5: 462.  
 effect on—  
   ammonia formation, 7: 298.  
   bacterial activities of the soil, 10: 361; 13: 251.  
   carbon-dioxide formation, 7: 298.  
   carbonation of calcium hydroxide in soils, 7: 411.  
   nitrate formation, 7: 298.  
   nitrate production, 19: 381.  
   root-nematode, 4: 482.  
 equivalent—  
   centrifuge for studying, 25: 455.  
   climate effects on, 1: 9.  
   determinations of salt treated soils, 4: 463.  
   freezing point depression of soils at their, 12: 227.

## Moisture—

equivalent—(continued)  
 of soils, 25: 16.  
 studies on, 19: 251; 20: 422; 21: 411.  
 theoretical discussion, 4: 467.  
 equivalent, relation to—  
   ammonification, 10: 381.  
   calcium carbonate in soils, 22: 81.  
   forest floor cover, 23: 67.  
   heat of wetting, 14: 431.  
   hygroscopic coefficient, 4: 463.  
   mechanical analyses of soils, 4: 471; 9: 159.  
   moisture properties of soils under irrigation, 8: 303.  
   unfree water, 14: 431.  
   vapor pressure, 11: 429.  
   wilting coefficient, 8: 306.  
 holding capacity of soils, method used, 10: 364; 22: 234.  
 initial, in soils, its relation to moisture movement, 10: 143.  
 movement—  
   by capillarity, 7: 313.  
   in air-dry soil, 19: 288.  
   in soils, 25: 17.  
   tubes for use in work on, 10: 147.  
   relation to fungus flora, 25: 437.  
   relations of soils and plants, 3: 129.

**Mold**—see Fungi, Soil fungi.

**Molybdenum**, determination of, in soils, 15: 5.

**Mononchs**, studies in, 3: 431.

**Muck**—  
 colloids in, 1: 596.  
 frost occurrence in, soils, 14: 383.  
 lime requirement of, 9: 77.  
 sulfides in, 14: 167.

## N

**Nasturtium**, diastatic activity of, 20: 459.

**Nematode** root, study of, and control, 4: 481.

**Neubauer** method for ascertaining fertilizer requirements, 23: 199, 456.

## Nitrate—

absorption of, by plants, 16: 228.  
 accumulation of—  
   from nitrification, 4: 403.  
   in darkness, 10: 349.  
   in peat, 1: 336.  
   in soils, 1: 333; 22: 1; 24: 360.  
 relationship to alkali, 2: 355.

**Nitrate—**

- accumulation of—(*continued*)
  - relationship to non-symbiotic bacteria, 2: 356.
  - straw mulch and, 14: 299; 20: 253.
- apparatus for determining, 4: 205.
- bacteria, *see* Bacteria.
- formation, as affected by—
  - aluminum salts, 13: 102.
  - clover tops, green and dry, 9: 144.
  - nitrogenous substances, 11: 309.
  - seasonal variations, 18: 219.
  - sulfur in soil, 12: 197.
  - sulfur treatment, 21: 248.
  - straw addition, 12: 235.
- forming organisms, effect of nitrogen compounds on, 11: 389.
- forming power, 2: 195.
- Giltay solution in studying, 1: 333.
- leachings, as affected by calcium and magnesium additions, 19: 309.
- nitrogen—
  - after harvesting crops, 10: 257, 266.
  - amount of, in surface soil planted with corn, 17: 337.
  - from ammonium sulfate, 10: 267.
  - in soil growing soybeans, 9: 290; 10: 257, 346.
  - losses from lysimeters, 19: 311.
  - pineapple growth with, 20: 227.
  - removal by crops, 10: 259, 266.
  - transformation in soils treated with organic matter, 17: 303.
- nitrogen, relation to—
  - calcium and magnesium additions, 19: 311.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration values of soils, 14: 9.
- producing capacity of soils, 9: 62.
- reduction of, 1: 332; 8: 89.
- relation to—
  - acidity, 1: 335.
  - carbon-dioxide and ammonia formation, 7: 293.
  - depth of soil, 2: 197; 12: 335, 339.
  - moisture content, 2: 201.
- retention of, by quartz and silt loam, 13: 201.
- soda, *see* Sodium nitrate.

**Nitrates—*see also* Soils nitrates.**

- accumulation of, in darkness, 10: 349.
- as affected by—
  - aeration, 7: 303.

**Nitrates—**

- as affected by—(*continued*)
  - alcohol treatment, 3: 372.
  - alum, 4: 193.
  - calcium carbonate, 7: 298.
  - cellulose and wood-pulp, 17: 203.
  - chloroform, 4: 191.
  - cotton seed meal additions, 7: 296.
  - dried blood, 7: 308.
  - drying of soil, 13: 191, 194.
  - heating the soil, 5: 208.
  - lime, 12: 140.
  - moisture of soil, 7: 298; 19: 381.
  - organic matter in the soil, 25: 281.
  - sawdust application, 17: 203.
  - seasonal variations, 12: 309.
  - storage of soil, 13: 190.
  - straw, 12: 240; 20: 159; 24: 311.
  - sulfur oxidation, 19: 427.
  - temperature, 19: 381.
  - thymol, 4: 190.
  - toluene, 3: 372.
  - water-soil ratio extraction, 13: 188.
- assimilation of, by soil microorganisms, 24: 79.
- conversion of, into nitrites in the soil, 25: 395.
- distribution of, in soil under corn culture, 17: 323.
- effect on—
  - alfalfa meal decomposition, 17: 302.
  - ammonification, 2: 466.
  - cellulose decomposition, 17: 307.
  - legume bacteria, 10: 343.
  - nitrate occurrence in plants, 10: 347.
  - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 151.
  - reducing sugars in plant juice, 10: 347.
  - rye straw decomposition, 17: 302.
  - soils, 11: 144.
  - sulfate determination, 13: 239.
  - total nitrogen determination in soils, 6: 487.
- formation of, following growth of clover and timothy, 9: 53.
- in—
  - acid soils, 1: 317.
  - field soils, 17: 333.
  - rocks, 2: 347.
  - soil and soil-manure mixtures, 7: 267.
- locking up of, by bacteria, 1: 333.
- loss of, from soil, 22: 1, 13.

**Nitrates—(continued)**

- methods of determining—
  - aluminum reduction and Ulsch, comparison of, 17: 167.
  - amino acids factor in, 10: 335.
  - asparagin, factor in, 10: 335.
  - comparison, 4: 183.
  - colorimetric in turbid solution, 12: 413.
  - Devarda, 10: 335.
  - formula to calculate deviation, 4: 183.
  - ratio of soil to water, 4: 189.
  - reduction in the Ulsch, 4: 195.
  - Schloesing and Devarda, comparison, 10: 339.
  - time of extracting, 4: 188.
  - use of antiseptic in, 4: 190.
  - various, 1: 84; 4: 179; 10: 333; 17: 163.
- outgo of, from lysimeters, 22: 21; 23: 175.
- production of, as modified by chemical treatment, 25: 335.
- reduction of, by actinomyces, 25: 231.
- reduction of, by cellulose and sawdust, 17: 205.
- relation to—
  - clover crop, 21: 1.
  - crop yield, 14: 14.
  - nodule formation, 10: 343.
  - utilization of, by soil fungi, 5: 375.
  - variability of, in soils, 15: 395; 24: 259.
  - wheat yields and, 24: 247.

**Nitre spots—**

- ammonifying, nitrifying and nitrogen fixing power of, 4: 412.
- geologic and geographic distribution, 2: 358.
- origin of, 2: 346.

**Nitric nitrogen—see Nitrates.**

- content of native rock 2: 345.
- formation at various moisture contents, 10: 372.

**Nitrification—**

- antagonistic action of salts as measured by, 10: 77.
- as affected by—
  - aeration, 20: 260.
  - alcohol, 3: 372.
  - alkali salts, 4: 207; 19: 357, 371.
  - aluminum salts, 13: 81, 99.
  - antiseptics, volatile, 3: 377.
  - calcium salts, 13: 264.
  - carbonates, 13: 269.

**Nitrification—****as affected by—(continued)**

- chlorides, 13: 266.
  - climate, 1: 15.
  - clover plowed under, 22: 2.
  - coral limestone, 4: 332.
  - cropping, 19: 423.
  - dicyandiamid, 17: 496.
  - drying 18: 228.
  - fertilizer salts, 11: 449.
  - gasoline, 3: 374.
  - guanyl urea sulfate, 17: 496.
  - gypsum, 15: 142.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration, 17: 60.
  - leaching, 1: 293.
  - lime, 5: 12; 6: 424; 7: 381; 12: 136, 147, 332; 21: 446.
  - limestone, 4: 330, 445.
  - limestone fineness, 4: 41, 46.
  - magnesium salts, 13: 265.
  - manganese, 2: 67.
  - moisture content of soil, 10: 368; 13: 262; 19: 390; 23: 141.
  - mulching, 20: 259; 22: 53.
  - nitrates, 13: 267.
  - nitrogenous materials, 6: 424; 12: 343; 23: 139.
  - petroleum, 14: 468.
  - phosphates, 13: 456.
  - potassium salts, 13: 262.
  - reaction, 15: 251; 17: 60.
  - sampling of soil, 6: 135.
  - sawdust, 17: 205.
  - sodium bicarbonate, 4: 214.
  - sodium carbonate, 4: 216.
  - sodium chloride, 4: 209.
  - sodium nitrate, 4: 396.
  - sodium salts, 13: 262.
  - stirring soil, 24: 36.
  - sulfates, 13: 268.
  - sulfur oxidation, 5: 317.
  - toluene, 3: 372.
  - tree products, 13: 303.
- availability of phosphorus and, 6: 360.
  - bases consumed in, 11: 268.
  - by fungi, 6: 141.
  - effect on—
    - aluminum production in soils, 13: 98.
    - potassium and other soil constituents, 7: 183.
    - rock phosphate, 6: 351.
    - soil fertility, 3: 399.

**Nitrification**—(*continued*)

experiments, 1: 62; 2: 577; 3: 44; 4: 396;  
6: 351, 423, 453; 12: 137, 147, 176;  
16: 55.

in—

acid soils, 1: 318, 325; 18: 229.  
alkali soils, 4: 214; 18: 248; 23: 284.  
field soils, 17: 333.  
Indian soils, 20: 337.  
solution, 3: 44.  
South-African soil, 12: 301; 18: 219.  
tropical soils, 17: 433.  
various soils, 5: 7; 24: 187.

mathematical discussion of, 2: 488.

methods for the study of, 15: 241.

nature of, 2: 481.

of—

amino acids, 20: 343; 24: 187.  
ammonium phosphate, 5: 5.  
ammonium sulfate, 1: 18, 63; 2: 89,  
577; 4: 333, 397; 5: 5; 6: 424; 15:  
248; 16: 61; 21: 446; 24: 85.  
barnyard manure in soil, 8: 243.  
casein, 1: 329; 6: 424.  
cottonseed meal, 1: 17; 2: 89, 577; 3:  
66; 4: 403; 5: 5.  
cowpeas, 12: 327.  
dried blood, 1: 18; 2: 89, 577; 3: 66;  
4: 333, 399; 5: 5; 6: 361, 424; 15:  
248; 16: 60; 17: 496.  
fish-guano, 3: 70.  
gelatin, 1: 329.  
green manures, 22: 281.  
sweet clover plants, 24: 31.  
tankage, 3: 67; 5: 5.  
urea, 13: 376, 384; 17: 496.  
whale manure, 12: 342.

rate of, of different nitrogen fertilizers, 5:  
7.

rate of, factors influencing, 23: 138.

relation to—

ammonification and nitrogen-fixation,  
10: 379.  
calcium carbonate availability 4: 327.  
nitrogen availability, 3: 63.  
water soluble nitrogen, 24: 35.

soil fertility and, 16: 55.

**Nitrifying bacteria**—

calcium carbonate effect on, 1: 329.

effect, on growth of barley, 18: 323.

toxicity of salts to, 4: 208.

**Nitrites**—

accumulation of, formed in nitrification  
process, 4: 410.

**Nitrites**—(*continued*)

conversion of, into nitrates in soils, 25:  
395.

determination of, in plant tissue, 10: 333.

oxidation of—

by microorganisms, 17: 57.

by nitrobacter, 8: 443.

quantitative determination of, in soil, 25:  
393.

recovery of, from sterilized soils, 25: 395.

**Nitrobacter**—

crude cultures of, 8: 442.

isolation of, 8: 445; 11: 393.

organic nitrogenous substances, effect on,  
11: 394.

oxidation of nitrites by, 8: 443.

silicic acid gel plates for, 8: 449.

staining properties of, 11: 402.

vitality of, 11: 401.

**Nitrogen**—*see also* Soil nitrogen.

absorption of, by plants, 19: 185.

ammonia—

in soils, 3: 405.

method for determining, 1: 83; 18: 192.

ammonium sulfate—

as source of, for barley, 5: 427, 434.

availability of, 5: 291.

recovery from limed and unlimed soils,  
1: 503.

utilization by buckwheat, 3: 498.

availability—

for barley, 2: 579.

methods for the study of, 22: 256.

plants as indicators of, 23: 139.

study in cylinder experiments, 12: 1.

availability, as affected by—

gypsum, 15: 140.

sterilization of soil, 24: 154.

availability from—

garbage tankage, 21: 59.

manures, 4: 347; 5: 291.

peat, 18: 311.

sodium nitrate, 4: 345.

urea, 21: 59.

availability of—

ammonium sulfate, 5: 291; 15: 333.

dried blood, 5: 291.

green manures, 22: 253.

sodium nitrate, 5: 291.

barnyard-manure, nitrification of, 8: 248.

calcium relationships in plants, discus-  
sion of theory, 15: 185.

carbon relationships with clover decompo-  
sition, 9: 148.



**Nitrogen—(continued)**

- carriers of, in fertilizers, 9: 487.
- changes in soils during growth of legumes, 9: 309.
- compounds, utilization of by actinomycetes, 8: 176.
- content of dispersed materials, 23: 393.
- content of 34 species of plants, 10: 52.
- content of soils and crops as affected by gypsum, 9: 457.
- content of soils, as affected by lime, 9: 110.
- determination, as affected by nitrates in soil, 6: 487.
- determination, methods—
  - aluminum, 6: 489.
  - Hibbard, 6: 488.
  - salicylic, 6: 488.
  - Ulsch, 6: 487.
- economy in the soil, 10: 249.
- effect on—
  - alfalfa, inoculated and uninoculated, 3: 90.
  - availability of insoluble phosphates, 13: 358.
  - bacterial population in soil, 25: 40.
  - neutral and acid-salt forming bases, 25: 243.
  - nitrogen content of legumes, 11: 445.
  - nitrogen economy of a Wooster silt loam, 18: 87.
  - nodulation of soybeans, 17: 446.
  - protein of soybeans, 22: 175.
  - ratio of tops to roots in flax, 21: 303.
  - sulfur oxidation, 6: 359.
- fertilizers—
  - availability, 3: 63; 5: 55.
  - germination as affected by, 5: 67.
  - mineral and organic, for cranberries, 8: 484.
- fibrin, hydrolysis of, 5: 163.
- fixation—*see also* Azofication, Azotobacter.
  - direct method for the study of, 25: 37.
  - historical review, 9: 276.
  - in forest soils, 24: 355.
  - in solution with green manures, 4: 10.
  - mechanism of, 10: 418.
- fixation, as affected by—
  - alkali salts, 6: 174.
  - antiseptics, 6: 175.
  - carbonates, 13: 495.
  - calcium carbonate, 4: 446.
  - calcium salts, 13: 486.

**Nitrogen—**

- fixation, as affected by—(continued)
  - chlorides, 13: 491.
  - climate, 1: 22, 24; 6: 200; 14: 127.
  - clover, 1: 66; 4: 6.
  - colloids, 6: 177.
  - corn stover, 1: 66.
  - cow manure, 1: 66.
  - cowpea, 1: 66.
  - green manure, 4: 10.
  - horse manure, 1: 66.
  - iron salts, 13: 490.
  - leaching of soil, 1: 295.
  - light and other rays, 6: 197.
  - magnesium salts, 13: 487.
  - manganese salts, 13: 488.
  - mannite, 4: 9.
  - mannite decomposition, 17: 379.
  - manure additions to soils, 6: 183; 7: 270.
  - moisture content of soils, 10: 374.
  - nitrates, 13: 493.
  - nitrogen in the soil, 9: 275.
  - oat straw, 1: 66.
  - organic matter additions, 9: 307.
  - organic nitrogen, 13: 495.
  - organic soil constituents, 6: 177.
  - potassium salts, 13: 485.
  - rotted manure, 1: 66.
  - sampling of soil, 6: 134.
  - sawdust, 24: 359.
  - sodium nitrate, 4: 415.
  - sodium salts, 13: 484.
  - soil acidity, 5: 175.
  - soil nitrogen, 9: 275.
  - straw, 12: 243.
  - sulfates, 13: 492.
  - sulfur treatment, 21: 249.
  - temperature, 6: 195.
  - timothy, 1: 66.
  - tree products, 24: 357.
  - wheat, 4: 6.
- fixation by—
  - actinomycetes, 3: 419.
  - alkali soils, 23: 287.
  - B. radicum*, of the soybean, 4: 447.
  - Bacterium aerogenes*, 25: 195.
  - cowpeas and nodule bacteria, 10: 411.
  - fungi, 6: 141.
  - inoculated soybeans, 11: 469.
  - nodule bacteria of soybeans, 20: 131.
  - non-symbiotic soil organisms, 4: 446.
  - pure cultures of bacteria, 4: 14.

**Nitrogen—**

- fixation by—(*continued*)
  - radicula-like forms, 3: 419.
  - various soils, 6: 458.
- fixation, relation to—
  - ammonification, 10: 379.
  - green manures, 4: 1.
  - nitrification, 10: 379.
- forms of, efficiency studies, 23: 137.
- free substance, effect on seed germination, 6: 336.
- humus, origin and significance, 3: 321.
- in—
  - corn following timothy and clover, 9: 60.
  - cowpea tops and roots, distribution of, 9: 311.
  - drainage water, 9: 57.
  - drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 187.
  - dry matter of crops from limed and unlimed soils, 9: 381.
  - humus and plant materials, comparison, 2: 434.
  - limed and unlimed soils, a comparison, 9: 86, 388.
  - oats following timothy and clover, 9: 60.
  - organic matter, 2: 539.
  - protein, distribution changes, 3: 318; 5: 163.
  - rainwater at Ithaca, New York, 11: 101.
  - soil-manure mixtures, 7: 262.
  - soils, availability studies, 12: 12.
  - soybean nodules, 11: 123.
  - soybeans, as affected by lime, 4: 71.
  - subsoils, enrichment of, 3: 34.
  - timothy and red clover, 9: 57.
- income and outgo of, in soils, 9: 386.
- legume, for non-legumes, 21: 253.
- loss, report on cylinder experiments, 12: 4, 7.
- losses through denitrification, 24: 285.
- losses under intensive cropping, 12: 1.
- methods for determining, 1: 83.
- movement within the soil, review, 6: 287.
- nitrate, *see* Nitrate, Nitrates, Sodium nitrate.
- nitric—
  - factors influencing determination of, 4: 179.
  - from various fertilizers, 6: 185.
  - in native rock, 2: 345.
- nitrous in irrigated soils, 3: 149.

**Nitrogen—(*continued*)**

- non-protein—
    - effect of heat on, in soils, 5: 209.
    - in soybean nodules, 11: 128.
    - method of determining, 6: 441; 12: 142.
    - soluble, in soils, 6: 441.
  - organic, method for determining, 3: 310; *see also* Organic nitrogen; Organic matter.
  - protein, method of determining, 11: 127.
  - recovered in crops, 5: 296; 10: 254; 17: 327.
  - recovery from—
    - applied fertilizers, 9: 383; 10: 254.
    - soils, methods, 5: 482.
  - recovery of, in crops, 25: 284.
  - relation to—
    - crop residues, 20: 319.
    - manure treatment, 20: 319.
    - rainfall, 11: 103; 24: 446.
    - series and type in virgin grassland soils, 24: 421.
    - topography of soil, 24: 448.
  - removal of—
    - by millet, corn, rye, wheat, beets, soybeans, vetch, barley and clover, 10: 254.
    - from soil following the growth of timothy and clover, 9: 61.
    - from soils variously treated, 22: 373.
  - salts, comparison of, with dried blood, 7: 122.
  - sodium nitrate availability of, in soils, 4: 345; 5: 291.
  - soluble, accumulation of, in soil due to heating, 16: 151.
  - sources on manured plots, 20: 320.
  - soybean, as affected by inoculation, 1: 579.
  - transformations and sulfonation, 5: 311.
  - unknown non-protein, in soils, 6: 444.
  - utilization of, by fungi, 6: 148.
  - variability of, in soils, 15: 395.
  - water soluble nitrogen in soils, 6: 456; 24: 34.
- Nitrogenous—**
- fertilizers for cranberries, 8: 483.
  - substances, effect on soybean germination, 6: 336.
- Nitrosomonas—**
- as affected by—
    - sodium chloride, 8: 456.
    - soil extract, 8: 456.

**Nitrosomonas**—(*continued*)

- crude cultures of, 8: 450.
- isolation of, 8: 458.
- organisms in enrichment cultures, 8: 454.
- oxidation of ammonium sulfate by, 8: 451.
- sensitivity to light, 8: 466.

**Nodulation**—

- as affected by—
  - calcium carbonate in the presence of acid phosphate, 17: 454.
  - lime, 17: 452.
  - mineral fertilizers, 17: 455.
  - osmotic pressure, 17: 449.
  - phosphate, 17: 449.
- toxicity of fertilizers to, 17: 455.

**Nodule**—

- bacteria, *see* Bacteria nodule.
- depression in soybeans, 1: 172.
- formation, lack of, in a subfamily of leguminosae, 20: 165.
- forming bacteria, as affected by soybean germination, 7: 237.
- production, kinship between soybean and cowpea, 15: 277.
- soybeans, as affected by—
  - fertilizers, 6: 81; 17: 439.
  - nitrates, 13: 278.
  - reaction, 13: 271.

**Nodules**—

- composition of, 11: 126.
- nitrogen in soybean, 11: 123.
- production of, on different parts of the alfalfa root, 24: 103.
- Nucleic acid, hydrolysis of, 6: 327.

**Nutrient**—

- requirements of—
  - clover, 12: 287.
  - potato plant, 10: 389.
  - wheat, 12: 287.
- solution, as affected by—
  - agar, 7: 205.
  - aluminum hydroxide, 7: 212.
  - aluminum salts, 13: 23.
  - ammonium sulfate, 5: 123, 452.
  - calcium, 25: 373.
  - ferrous sulfate and ferric phosphate, 11: 93.
  - iron hydroxide, 7: 212.
  - magnesium, 25: 374.
  - nitrogen in, 25: 372.
  - phosphorus in, 25: 376.
  - plants growth, 16: 372.

**Nutrient**—solution, as affected by—(*continued*)

- potassium in, 25: 376.
  - silica, 7: 207.
  - sulfur in, 25: 377.
- solutions—
- absorption of ions from, 15: 193.
  - alfalfa grown in, 18: 353; 22: 97.
  - bacteria-free, method and technique, 3: 162.
  - barley grown in, 19: 179.
  - buffer action of, 12: 74.
  - calcium absorption by barley and vetch grown together in, 15: 193.
  - clover and wheat in, 12: 28.
  - comparison with sand cultures, 2: 226; 16: 367.
  - concentration and reaction of, as affected by sand, 9: 169.
  - concentration of, in sand cultures, 5: 128.
  - Crone, 13: 279.
  - Crone, Pryanishnikov, and Helriegel, a comparison, 21: 327.
  - density of, as measured by freezing point lowering, 3: 124.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration effects on, 10: 481; 11: 325; 12: 69.
  - injury to plants in some, 5: 106.
  - lupines grown in, 21: 1.
  - method of adding, 5: 125.
  - nitrogen absorption by barley and vetch grown together in, 15: 193.
  - oats grown in, 17: 179.
  - one-salt, 15: 69.
  - orthoclase as a source of potassium, 15: 171.
  - osmotic concentration of, method of control, 5: 91, 127.
  - phosphate concentration in, 25: 338.
  - phosphorus absorption from, by plants, 24: 129.
  - physiological balance of, 2: 207.
  - pineapples grown in, 20: 229.
  - plant growth in, sand cultures or soil, a comparison, 16: 367.
  - plant supports when studied in, 16: 359.
  - potassium concentration in, 25: 340.
  - problem of proper, 21: 327.
  - reaction of, induced by plants, 25: 373.
  - relation to mineral absorption by plants 25: 337.

**Nutrient—**solutions—*(continued)*

- sand cultures and, 2: 207; 6: 1; 7: 209;  
see also Sand cultures.
- seed weight and growth of plant in, 15: 285.
- Shive, 13: 276.
- Shive's, statistical analyses of, 11: 3.
- sodium chloride effects on alfalfa grown in, 16: 183.
- soil extract as, 15: 122.
- soybean growth in, 13: 276; 20: 1.
- study of "six types" of, 20: 397.
- three salt, hydrogen-ion concentration of, 10: 481; 11: 325.
- Tottingham, 5: 127, 130; 13: 25.
- toxicity of monobasic phosphates to soybeans in, 5: 87.
- triangular method in the study of, 5: 126; 11: 327; 12: 287.
- vessel type for, 17: 99.
- wheat grown in, 19: 179.

**O****Oat plant—**

- acidity of juice, 8: 236.
- potassium content of, 12: 37.
- studies on growth of the, 22: 216.

**Oat straw—**

- calcium content of, 12: 31.
- carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
- phosphorus content of, 12: 31.

**Oats—**

## as affected by—

- calcium salts, 14: 239.
- cellulose from wood, 17: 201.
- dextrin, 14: 239.
- gypsum, 15: 150.
- magnesium silicate, 14: 239.
- silica, 14: 239.

- calcium content of, 15: 375.
- fertilizer nutrients for, 19: 169.
- phosphorus nutrition of, 20: 355.

**Organic—**

## acids—

- formation of, in plants, 8: 228.
- in soil, source of, 8: 53.
- source of, 12: 158.

## carbon—

- apparatus for determining, 2: 401.
- crop effects on, 8: 28.
- in drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 189.
- lime influence on, 18: 211.

**Organic—**carbon—*(continued)*

- ratio of phosphoric acid to, 11: 186.
- ratio to nitrogen, 11: 190.

## compounds—

- assimilation of, by plants, 3: 157, 166.
- availability of phosphorus in, 10: 139.
- production due to soil sterilization, 7: 4.

- humifying substance combination with soil phosphorus, 3: 108.

## matter—

- absorption of ammonia by, 2: 325.
- alkali soluble, 18: 212; 20: 323.
- apparatus for study decomposition of, 17: 147.

- carbon factor in estimating soil, 13: 1.

- carbon in, 2: 539.

- carbon-nitrogen ratio in, 1: 50.

- discussion, 25: 27.

- due to cover crops, 9: 32.

- hydrogen-peroxide method in removing, 16: 439.

- in soils, 2: 395, 539; 3: 1, 99.

- influence on soil fungi, 2: 4.

- method for determining, 3: 307; 13: 5; 15: 361; 20: 322; 24: 65.

- methods of increasing solubility of, 6: 380.

- nitrogen factor for determining, 13: 5.

- nitrogen studies, 2: 539.

- origin and nature of, 22: 123, 221, 323, 395, 421.

- oxidation in soil, 13: 149.

- oxidation of, by nitric acid, 2: 325.

- removal of, by oxidation with hydrogen peroxide, 16: 439.

- soluble in 3 per cent sodium hydroxide, 20: 322.

- source of, historical, 17: 294.

- studies, 2: 395; 3: 1, 99, 297; 22: 123, 221, 323, 395, 421; 24: 309.

## matter, as affected by—

- crop residues, 20: 319.

- cropping methods, 25: 469.

- extraction of soil with acid, 6: 379.

- gypsum, 15: 143.

- hydrogen-peroxide, 16: 439.

- limestone and burned lime, 20: 321; 23: 107.

- manure application, 20: 319.

- plant growth, oxidation of, 13: 147, 149.

**Organic—(continued)**

- matter, composition of—
  - carbohydrate materials, 6: 415.
  - natural, 24: 275, 317.
  - nitrogenous material, 6: 414.
- matter, decomposition—
  - in the soil, 24: 275, 317.
  - method of study, 17: 144, 296.
  - observations on, 17: 293.
  - nature of, historical, 17: 295.
- matter, decomposition as affected by—
  - lime, 1: 89; 18: 201; 19: 267.
  - nitrate of sodium and potassium, 2: 357.
- matter, effect on—
  - actinomycetes development, 17: 373.
  - bacteria development, 17: 373.
  - biological activities in the soil, 16: 266.
  - carbonation of calcium oxide, 7: 423.
  - carbon-dioxide evolution in soils, 24: 310.
  - crop yield, 25: 281.
  - fungi development, 17: 373.
  - iron adsorption by soils, 22: 167.
  - moisture equivalent, 9: 166.
  - nitrate content of soil, 25: 281.
  - nitrogen balance in soil, 9: 293.
  - oat growth, 24: 80.
  - plant growth, 24: 95.
  - potassium solubility from orthoclase, 15: 177.
  - soil reaction, 6: 413; 12: 145.
  - soil solution composition, 3: 528.
  - solubility of minerals, 8: 289.
- matter, extraction of—
  - from an alkali-free soil, 21: 461.
  - with ammonium chloride, 6: 381.
  - with salts of phosphorus, 25: 467.
- matter, relation to—
  - heat of wetting, 19: 480.
  - nitrogen in soil, 24: 425.
  - rock phosphate utilization, 12: 21.
  - series and types in virgin grassland soils, 24: 421.
  - yields, 20: 320.
- nitrogen—
  - assimilation of, by Zea mays, 3: 155.
  - forms of, in limed and unlimed soils, 22: 69.
  - methods for determining, 3: 307.
  - nature of distribution, in soils, 3: 297.
  - recovery of, 1: 503.
- nitrogen, effect on nitrate-forming organisms, 11: 389.

**Organic—(continued)**

- phosphorus—see also Phosphorus organic.
  - hydrolysis of, 16: 288.
  - in soils, 10: 127; 13: 119; 16: 281.
- solvents, volatile matter extracted by, 22: 68.
- substances, effect on—
  - alkali soils, 13: 126.
  - seed germination, 6: 333.
- Organisms**—see also Bacteria, Fungi.
  - ammonifying, and relation to higher plants, 2: 469.
  - isolation of, from nodules of legumes, 6: 398.
  - nitrate-forming, as affected by nitrogen compounds, 11: 389.
  - nitrifying in cultivated soils, 3: 404.
  - sulfur oxidizing, isolation of, 12: 476.
- Orthoclase**—
  - potassium in, for plant nutrition, 15: 167.
  - solubility of, in salts of calcium, sodium, etc., 15: 174, 176.
- Osmometer**, description of, 4: 241.
- Osmotic**—
  - concentration—
    - procedure for determining, 5: 442.
    - relation to absorption by seeds, 11: 277.
  - pressure—
    - effect on wheat growth, 15: 230.
    - of soils, 5: 384.
    - relation to solution cultures, 2: 229; 5: 127.
    - soluble salt toxicity and, 12: 163.
- Oxidation** and reduction potentials, discussion, 9: 200.
- Oxygen**—
  - apparatus for, determination, 15: 490.
  - decomposition of vetch in a limited supply of, 9: 145.
  - dissolved, micro-sampling for the determination of, 15: 489.

**P****Pasteur-Chamberland filter—**

- phosphate absorption by, 20: 151.
- sulfate determination in filtrate from, 13: 243.
- Pasture**, botanical composition of, as influenced by fertilizers, 7: 161.
- Peas**—
  - sawdust effects on growth of, 17: 205.
  - tolerance of, to sodium chloride, 22: 317.

**Peat**—*see also* Soils peat.

- alkali soil treatment with, 17: 398.
  - analyses—
    - composition, 2: 406.
    - comparison of Jämsköpings and Bremen methods of, 5: 213.
  - aspartic acid from, 11: 464.
  - bottom, study of, 17: 434.
  - calcium estimation in, method, 1: 505.
  - capillary rise of water in alkali soils treated with, 17: 399.
  - classification, 10: 453; 17: 111.
  - deposits in United States, 10: 453.
  - deposits, stratigraphic study of, 17: 107.
  - disintegration of, 17: 114.
  - extraction of nitrogen from, 5: 486.
  - extraction of, with sodium hydroxide, 3: 317.
  - glutaminic acid from, 11: 464.
  - hydrolysis of sphagnum covered, 3: 312.
  - method for field study of, 17: 116.
  - nitrification in, 1: 323.
  - nitrogen—
    - amide acid, in, 11: 457.
    - availability of, 18: 311.
    - forms of, 11: 457.
    - heat effects on, 5: 211.
    - method for determining, 3: 308.
  - pyrrolidone carboxylic acid in, 11: 465.
  - subcommission for the study of, 25: 85.
  - sulfur oxidation and, 5: 282; 6: 358.
- Pentosans**—
- content of, in legumes and non-legumes, 4: 5.
  - destruction of, by molds and other micro-organisms, 15: 479.
  - nitrogen fixation and, 4: 5.
- Peptone**—
- effect on nitrate determination, 4: 198.
  - in sterile culture for plants, 3: 186.
- Petroleum**—
- effect on soil flora, 14: 465.
  - vegetative growth in soils containing, 8: 67.
- Phosphate**—*see also* Phosphoric acid, Phosphorus.
- absorption of, by—
    - gels of aluminum and iron, 15: 159.
    - Pasteur-Chamberland filter, 20: 149.
    - plants, 16: 233.
  - aluminum, agricultural value, 13: 355.
  - and soybean injury, 1: 169.
  - available state of, in relation to crop, 17: 361.

**Phosphate**—(continued)

- availability of—
    - as determined by vegetation experiments, 4: 337.
    - in relation to sulfur oxidation, 1: 535; 2: 506; 5: 247.
  - barium, as fertilizer, 8: 488.
  - calcium, agricultural value, 13: 355.
  - concentration in culture solution, 25: 338.
  - effect on—
    - aluminum inactivation, 13: 104.
    - chernozem, 25: 463.
    - nitrification, 13: 456.
    - nodulation of soybeans, 17: 442.
    - protein content of soybeans, 6: 106.
    - soil acidity, 13: 461.
    - soils, 11: 149; 18: 279.
    - soybean oil content, 6: 106.
    - sulfate production, 1: 343.
  - fertilizer for cranberries, 8: 483.
  - forms of, in soil, 25: 143.
  - in soil solution, 25: 143.
  - iron, agricultural value, 13: 355.
  - monobasic, studies on, 1: 353; 5: 87; 24: 263.
  - precipitation of, in soil, 25: 152.
  - reactions between monocalcium, and soils, 24: 263.
  - reversion of, in soils, 25: 463.
  - rock—*see also* Rock phosphate.
    - availability for corn, 9: 235.
    - availability due to ammonium nitrate and sodium nitrate, 9: 241.
    - fertilizing value, 1: 353.
    - for oats, 1: 353.
    - for soybeans 25: 314.
    - nitric nitrogen content of, 2: 345.
    - organic phosphorus in, 24: 23.
    - pyrites, sulfur, soil and, 14: 138.
    - sulfur mixtures, 1: 535; 4: 269.
  - rock, as affected by—
    - feeding power of plants, 12: 21.
    - lime, 12: 24.
    - nitrification, 6: 351.
    - organic matter, 12: 21.
    - oxidation of iron pyrites, 14: 135.
    - sulfur oxidation, 6: 351; 10: 315, 327; 13: 107; 14: 256.
  - soluble in soils, test for, 11: 111.
  - solubility in saline solutions, 7: 133.
  - solubility of, 25: 145.
- Phosphoric acid**—*see also* Soil phosphoric acid.

**Phosphoric acid—(continued)**

- adsorption of, in soils, discussion, 3: 106.
- climatic effects on, in soils, 1: 35, 41.
- content of loess soil, 1: 299; 2: 385.
- determination of, in peat soils, 5: 213.
- in drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 184.
- organic carbon ratio, 11: 186.

**Phosphorus—see also Phosphate, Soil phosphorus.**

- absorption of, by plants, 19: 185; 24: 129, 141.
- ammonia soluble, in soils, 6: 386.
- as affected by—
  - bacteria, 7: 145.
  - calcium salts, 7: 147.
  - iron salts, 7: 149.
  - lime, 7: 128.
  - magnesium salts, 7: 147.
  - manganese salts, 7: 148.
  - potassium salts, 7: 146.
  - salts, 7: 145.
- assimilation of, from phytin, 22: 477; 24: 17.
- available, method of determining, 4: 272.
- availability—
  - adsorbed, 15: 371.
  - discussion, 17: 461; 23: 460.
  - from phosphate rock and sulfur mixtures, 4: 269.
  - lime effects on, 17: 463.
  - organic, 24: 119.
  - raw rock phosphate, 17: 39.
  - silica effects on, 17: 463.
  - soil reaction, effects on, 17: 463.
- behavior of, in soils, 17: 41.
- determination—
  - Fischer method, 4: 298.
  - Fiske and Subbaros method, 24: 114.
  - Hilgard method, 4: 306.
  - modification of Washington method, 4: 304.
  - titanium effect on, 4: 308.
  - vanadium interference in, 2: 299.
- distribution in soils, 6: 326.
- effect on—
  - alfalfa, 3: 7; 16: 127.
  - alfalfa bacteria, 3: 77.
  - aluminum content of plants, 19: 192.
  - bacterial activity, 3: 80.
  - crop yields in relation to soil type, 14: 375.
  - iron content of plants, 19: 192.
  - lupines, 20: 354.
  - mannite decomposition, 15: 351.

**Phosphorus—****effect on—(continued)**

- nitrogen availability, 19: 467.
  - nitrogen economy in soil, 18: 87.
  - soybeans, 25: 315.
  - in—
    - peat, 4: 303; 5: 213.
    - plants, 2: 387; 10: 52; 12: 31, 35.
    - prairie soils, 2: 493.
    - rainwater, 15: 217.
    - soils treated with phosphorus, 6: 293, 298.
    - solution, 3: 540.
  - inorganic, methods of analyzing, 6: 366; 20: 149; 24: 109.
  - movement of, review, 6: 284.
  - nature of, extracted with hydrochloride from soils, 3: 102.
  - nutrition of oats, 20: 355; 22: 479.
  - organic—
    - availability of, to plants, 24: 119.
    - extraction of, 6: 372, 383.
    - forms of, 2: 291; 6: 321.
    - hydrolysis of, 6: 331.
    - in acid leachings, 6: 386.
    - in Iowa soils, 13: 119.
    - methods of determining, 2: 294; 6: 365; 7: 145; 24: 21, 109.
    - nature of, 6: 326.
  - removed by crops, 6: 305.
  - reversion of, in soils, 25: 463.
  - silicic acid and, requirement, 20: 354.
  - soil requirements for, 20: 354.
  - solubility of soil, in 0.2N nitric acid, 11: 113.
  - source of, for wheat, 25: 464.
- Phycomycetes** in soil, 3: 573.
- Phytin—**
- hydrolysis of, 6: 329.
  - phosphorus from, assimilation by plants, 22: 477; 24: 17.
- Pigment** formation of, by actinomyces, 8: 87.
- Pineapples—**
- chlorosis of, grown on manganiferous soils, 16: 269.
  - composition of, 20: 234.
  - growth of, with ammonia and nitrate nitrogen, 20: 227.
- Plant—see also Plants.**
- acidity, as affected by—
    - leaching, 13: 461.
    - lime, 13: 461.



**Plant—**

- acidity, as affected by—(*continued*)
  - nitrogen salt, 13: 461.
  - phosphates, 13: 461.
- acids—
  - diurnal changes, effect on, 8: 233.
  - factors influencing, 8: 230.
- breeding, studies in, 22: 217.
- cell, relation of H-ion concentration to the, 22: 217.
- composition, as affected by—
  - fertilizers, 9: 240.
  - phosphates with nitrates, 9: 240.
  - silica and silicates, 14: 347.
- competition due to soil acidity, 5: 174.
- food—
  - adsorption of, by colloidal oxides of aluminum and iron, 15: 157.
  - constituents of acid digestion of soils, 15: 383.
  - movement of, in soil, 6: 281.
- food, as affected by—
  - colloidal silica, 14: 441.
  - gypsum, 9: 441.
  - soil colloids, 14: 449.
- growth, as affected by—
  - aluminum, 20: 202.
  - aspiration, 17: 238.
  - carbonates of calcium, sodium, and potassium, 18: 279.
  - cellulose from wood, 17: 199.
  - heating of soils, 7: 1.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration, 24: 1.
  - magnesium, 19: 332.
  - manganese, 19: 85.
  - manure, 24: 95.
  - organic residues, 24: 95.
  - phosphates of calcium, sodium, and potassium, 18: 279.
  - silica and silicates, 14: 347.
  - silicates of calcium, sodium, and potassium, 18: 279.
  - soil acidity, 14: 226.
  - solution volume in culture solutions, 15: 413; 16: 367.
- growth, effect on—
  - reaction of nutrient solutions from ammonia salts, 21: 340.
  - soluble materials in soils, 13: 438.
- growth, nutrient solutions, sand cultures and soil media for, 16: 367.
- growth, relation to—
  - absorption, 12: 291.
  - aluminum salts, 13: 23.

**Plant—**

- growth, relation to—(*continued*)
  - arsenic, 14: 111, 119.
  - iron availability in culture solutions, 15: 413; 16: 370.
  - phosphorus absorption from nutrient solution, 24: 129.
  - reaction changes in culture solution, 15: 413.
  - soil acidity, 5: 169.
  - soil solution, 15: 229; 21: 437.
  - sulfur, 5: 257.
- indicators of soil types, 13: 411.
- juice, legume and non-legume, composition of, 15: 197.
- juices—
  - alkali reserve of, 9: 360.
  - chlorophyll absence, effect on reaction of, 9: 362.
  - electrometric titration of, 7: 487.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration of, 8: 217, 227; 13: 461.
  - reaction of, 9: 341; 10: 351; 13: 281, 461.
  - reaction of, from different parts of plants, 9: 356; 13: 461.
- juices, acidity of—
  - as related to soil acidity, 7: 469; 9: 347; 13: 461.
  - method of determining, 9: 342.
- juices, as affected by—
  - nitrates, 10: 348.
  - reaction of culture medium, 13: 281.
  - soil, 8: 236.
- lime requirement as determined by the, 7: 279.
- materials, methods of analyzing, 24: 275.
- nutrition—
  - crop production and (book review), 23: 249.
  - potassium in orthoclase available for, 15: 167.
  - relation to sulfur, 11: 49.
- nutrients in soil, 25: 24.
- parasite theory of soil sterilization, 7: 4.
- pathogens, effect of H-ion concentration on, 14: 227.
- physiology, relation to soil solution, 3: 543.
- root tissues and soil acidity, 5: 177.
- roots, carbon dioxide effects on H-ion concentration of soils, 20: 296.
- soil relationships, 22: 31.
- stimulation by borax, 12: 94.

**Plant—(continued)**

- sulfur as a, food solvent, 11: 87.
- tissue, nitrites and nitrates in, 10: 333.
- toxins, *see* Toxins.
- transpiration and H-ion concentration, 11: 345.

**Plants—see also Plant.**

- ability of, to assimilate phosphorus from insoluble phosphates, 13: 356.
- absorption by, as influenced by carbon dioxide of air, 20: 39.
- absorption of ions by, 16: 225.
- acidity of juice of different parts of, 9: 352.
- acids found in, 8: 228.
- agricultural, with high acidities, 9: 356.
- aluminum in, 10: 159; 19: 192.
- as affected by—
  - fertilization, 22: 32.
  - fumigation of soils, 10: 16.
  - rare elements, 15: 13.
  - sodium chloride, 8: 398.
  - soil types, 13: 412.
- ash content of, 20: 9, 41.
- auximones and the growth of, 17: 193.
- calcium content of a number of, 5: 188; 13: 350; 20: 9, 41.
- carbohydrate metabolism of, as affected by potassium, 20: 459.
- cell sap concentration at different intervals, 3: 120.
- cell sap in, as affected by soil moisture, 9: 224.
- chlorosis in, 12: 73; 16: 269; 20: 7.
- composition of 34 species of, 10: 50.
- composition of, grown in quartz cultures, 17: 243.
- composition of soybean, as affected by calcium, 22: 182.
- distribution of, and H-ion concentration of soil, 16: 41.
- effect on—
  - bicarbonates in soil extracts, 25: 274.
  - concentration of drainage waters, 16: 427.
  - organic matter oxidation, 13: 147.
  - oxidation processes in the soil, 13: 139.
  - solubility of soil nutrients, 25: 273.
- elements found in, grown on silt clay loam soil, 15: 1.
- feeding power of—
  - and carbon dioxide production, 17: 229.
  - on rock phosphate, 12: 21.
- ferrocyanide of potassium and ferric, as source of iron for, 20: 23.

**Plants—(continued)**

- freezing-point lowering—
    - of, grown in soil extracts, 3: 127.
    - of roots and tops of, 3: 113.
  - studies, 9: 217.
  - growth of, in sterile solution, 3: 162.
  - hydrogen-ion toxicity, 3: 559.
  - iron in, 19: 192.
  - magnesium in, 13: 350; 20: 9.
  - manganese in, 15: 12.
  - moisture relations of soils and, 3: 129; 21: 75.
  - nitrogen in, 20: 9.
  - nutrient solutions for, 2: 207; 20: 1.
  - organic acids formed in, 8: 228.
  - phosphorus assimilation by, 23: 463.
  - phosphorus in, 20: 41.
  - physiological effect of soluble aluminum on, 20: 205.
  - physiological salt balance of, in connection with soil moisture, 14: 391.
  - potassium assimilation by, 23: 463.
  - potassium in, as an indicator of its availability, 23: 199.
  - potassium in various parts of different, 12: 37.
  - rainwater, utilization of, by, 25: 213.
  - rare elements in, 15: 12.
  - titanium in, 15: 12.
  - tolerance of, for sodium chloride, 22: 305.
  - variability of, grown in water cultures, 11: 1.
  - wilting of, as related to water supplying power of soils, 9: 469.
- Plows**, draft of, as affected by soil treatment, 21: 277.
- Polders**, studies on samples of soil from, 17: 434.
- Potassium—see also Soil potassium.**
- absorption of, by plants, 16: 228; 19: 185.
  - absorption of, by soils from potassium-fertilizers, 16: 112; 17: 262.
  - availability—
    - adsorbed, 15: 275.
    - discussion, 23: 461.
    - greensand marls treated with sulfur, 14: 307.
  - orthoclase, 15: 167.
  - plant potassium as indicators of, 23: 199.
  - sandy soils, 8: 297.
  - subsoil, 19: 105.
  - bearing minerals as source of, for plants, 8: 269.

**Potassium—(continued)**

- carbonate, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 455.
  - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
- chloride—
  - movement of, through limed and unlimed soil, 19: 460.
  - versus sulfate as fertilizer, 16: 107.
- chloride, effect on—
  - ammonia absorption, 2: 326.
  - ammonification, 2: 455; 4: 379.
  - composition of soybeans, 6: 101.
  - nitrate determinations, 4: 197.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164; 25: 314.
  - vapor pressure of soil, 25: 415.
- climatic effects on soil, 1: 32, 42.
- concentration in nutrient solution for corn, 25: 340.
- content of treated and untreated soils, 6: 295.
- drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 183.
- effect on—
  - nitrogen availability, 19: 467.
  - nitrogen content of legumes, 11: 445.
  - nitrogen economy of a Wooster silt loam, 18: 87.
  - nodulation of soybeans, 17: 443.
  - nutrition of rye plants, 20: 355.
- in—
  - rainwater, 15: 205.
  - thirty-four species of plants, 10: 52.
  - Wyoming alkali soil, 4: 208.
- liberation of, from feldspars, 16: 389.
- loess soil content of, 1: 299; 2: 381.
- luxury consumption of, 19: 112.
- method of determining, 6: 243; 12: 419; 19: 81; 22: 338.
- movement within the soil, 6: 287.
- nitrate, extraction of aluminum from soils with, 13: 88.
- nitrate, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 455.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
- permanganate method in determining man-nite decomposition, 15: 362.
- phosphate, effect on—
  - B. radicola*, 3: 84.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
- phosphate mono, in sand cultures, 2: 207.
- plants in cultures with and without, 12: 37.

**Potassium—(continued)**

- replacement of, in soils, 17: 91.
  - requirements of bacteria, 5: 219.
  - salts, effect on—
    - carbohydrate metabolism of plants, 20: 459.
    - nitrogen availability, 25: 333.
    - oil content of soybeans, 6: 108.
    - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 146.
    - protein content of soybeans, 6: 108.
    - soybean production, 6: 107.
  - salts from leucite and other silicates, 19: 42.
  - silica crucibles, use of, in determining, 12: 419.
  - soil analyses from experiments, 17: 461.
  - solubility, as affected by—
    - acid phosphate, 6: 245.
    - calcium sulfate, 6: 250.
    - calcium treatment, 8: 337.
    - magnesium treatment, 8: 337.
    - nitrification, 7: 189.
    - of feldspar with sulfur, 7: 191.
    - salt solutions, 6: 237.
    - sodium salts, 6: 252.
    - sulfonation, 7: 189.
    - sulfur applications, 8: 378.
  - sulfate, effect on—
    - ammonia absorption, 2: 326.
    - ammonia distribution, 2: 336.
    - ammonification, 2: 455.
    - nitrate determination, 4: 197.
    - soybean growth, 1: 164.
    - water-soluble, from minerals in organic matter mixtures, 8: 294.
- Potato scab**, relation of sulfur to, 9: 393; 11: 75.
- Protein—**
- decomposition—
    - by *B. mycoides*, 1: 183.
    - by *B. subtilis*, 1: 183.
    - in soils, 1: 509; 8: 53.
  - nitrogen—
    - distribution, when hydrolyzed in soil, 3: 318.
    - method of determining, 11: 127.
    - oats, nitrogen application and, 14: 103.
    - rye, nitrogen application and, 14: 103.
    - soybean, 1: 171; 6: 90; 11: 127.
  - wheat—
    - content and length of growing period, 13: 135.
    - nitrogen applications and, 14: 103.

**Proteolytic action of actinomycetes**, 8: 89.

**Proteose**, presence of, in soybeans, 11: 127.

**Protozoa—**

activity in soils, 1: 135; 2: 163; 3: 235.

apparatus for separating, 2: 178.

composition and distribution of (book review), 23: 415.

direct examination of, 9: 3.

distribution in different soils, 9: 11.

effect on biochemical processes in soil, 24: 149.

fauna of New Jersey soils, 9: 1.

fauna of the soils of the United States, 18: 339; 25: 107.

investigations, review, 3: 197.

method for counting, 5: 303; 9: 2; 18: 346.

numbers and types in soils, 1: 139.

**relation to—**

ammonification, 1: 141.

bacteria in soils, 1: 141; 2: 177, 363; 9: 13.

moisture, 1: 143.

soil molds, 9: 13.

soil treatment, 16: 250.

soil type, 9: 13.

species in New Jersey soils, 9: 6.

sterilization effects on, 1: 150.

**Pseudomonas—**

arguta, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 465.

minuscule, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 467.

mira, n.sp. cellulose decomposing, 1: 468.

**Pyrite**, effect on sulfate outgo from soils, 16: 159.

**Pyrites—**

oxidation of, 14: 135.

sulfur and rock phosphate mixtures, 14: 138.

**Pyruvic acid—**

iodoform reaction for, 25: 128.

production of, by nodule bacteria, 25: 123.

**Q**

**Quartz—**

adsorption of various alkaline compounds by, 18: 388.

flour, movement of water vapor through, 13: 57.

**sand—**

absorption of ammonium sulfate by, 3: 561.

**Quartz—**

sand—(continued)

cultures, composition of plants grown in, 17: 243.

**R**

**Rainfall, relation to—**

nitrogen content of soils, 14: 129.

potato scab, 16: 70.

**Rainwater—**

calcium in, 15: 205.

chlorides in, 15: 217.

magnesium in, 15: 205.

nitrogen in, 11: 101.

potassium in, 15: 204.

phosphates in, 15: 217.

reaction of, 15: 205.

sodium in, 15: 219.

soot in, 15: 220.

sulfur in, 14: 363; 15: 152, 205.

utilization of, by plants, 25: 213.

**Reaction—see also Hydrogen-ion concentration.**

change of, produced by seedlings, 3: 557.

**effect on—**

bacterial numbers in media, 2: 265.

fungi development in media, 2: 272.

**Reduction potentials** of bacterial cultures and of water-logged soils, 9: 199.

**Respiration apparatus** for plant and soil studies, 19: 411.

**Rhizobium radicum**, gentian violet toleration by, 20: 144.

**Rice soils**, their fertility and their titration curves, 14: 21.

**Roots—**

behavior of, in sterilized soil, 7: 33.

carbon-dioxide given off by the, of different plants, 17: 241.

distribution of, in relation to soil reaction, 16: 48.

nitrate in different portions of the, 10: 351.

oxidation processes in soil as influenced by, 13: 144.

seminal and nodal, physiological activity of, 21: 307.

solvent effect on phosphates, 13: 392.

**"Roterde"** characterization of, 20: 361, 362; 22: 213.

**Rothamsted**, the human element in the work at, 14: 175.

**Rubidium**, determination of, in soils, 15: 5.

**Rye—**

- age of, plants in relation to its decomposition, 24: 317.
- potassium nutrition of, 20: 355.
- straw—
  - decomposition of, in soil, 17: 298.
  - effect on microorganisms in soil, 17: 375.

**S****Salicylic aldehyde experiments, 2: 97.****Salt—**

- concentration, effect on germination, 1: 166; 18: 465.
- content, method of measuring, in soils, 19: 459.
- content of field soils, 13: 433; 19: 459.
- movement as affected by liming and temperature, 19: 459.
- requirements for—
  - buckwheat plants, 6: 1.
  - Lupinus albus, 21: 1.
- rock, value of, for killing live stumps, 9: 181.
- solution—
  - absorption of, by seed, 11: 277.
  - H-ion concentration relations in a three, 11: 325.
  - solubility of lead arsenate in, 14: 113.
  - solubility of soil potassium in, 6: 237.
- treated soils, effect on absorption by seeds, 3: 271.

**Salts—**

- accumulation in Ohio soils, 1: 575.
- antagonistic action of calcium and iron salts toward other, 10: 77.
- as flocculation agents, 1: 588.
- availability of, as influenced by soil colloids, 14: 1.
- bacteria in soil, 2: 443.
- chemical effects of, on soils, 11: 139.
- effect on—
  - azofication in soil, 13: 481.
  - soybean growth, 1: 163.
- electrical conductivity of, as influenced by colloids, 3: 423.
- evaporation, capillary rise and distribution of water in soils, 9: 409.
- extraction of, from soils varying the ratios of soil to water, 9: 45.
- in soils, 3: 271.
- moisture equivalent of soils, 4: 465.
- movement of, and moisture in air dry soil, 19: 288.

**Salts—(continued)**

- neutral, action of, on soil, 17: 436.
- nitrate determination, 4: 196.
- silicate, decomposition, 8: 279.
- soluble—
  - loss of, in runoff water, 21: 401.
  - movement of, in soils, 13: 445.
  - solubility of minerals in, 8: 289.
  - toxicity of, 12: 163.
- soluble, effect on—
  - bacterial activities in, 13: 251.
  - base absorption, 17: 270.
  - calcium carbonate solubility, 15: 80.
  - soil structure, 25: 409.
- stimulation of—
  - ammonifying organisms, 2: 470.
  - bacteria in soils, 7: 137.
- toxicity to—
  - ammonifying organisms, 2: 471.
  - soybean germination, 1: 166.

**Sand—**

- cultures—
  - abnormal stem growth of soybeans in, 6: 479.
  - growth of barley in, 5: 421; 14: 269.
  - growth of soybeans in, 5: 123.
  - lupines in, 21: 1.
  - method of renewing nutrients in, 6: 2; 7: 210; 10: 391.
  - nutrient requirements of the potato plant grown in, 10: 389; 20: 367.
  - physiological balance of nutrient solutions in, 2: 207.
  - salt requirement for buckwheat in, 6: 1.
- cultures, as affected by—
  - acid, 6: 259.
  - acid soil extracts, 6: 261.
  - ammonium sulfate, 5: 123, 421.
- effect of, on concentration and reaction of a nutrient solution, 9: 169.

**Sauerkraut—**

- cabbage composition in relation to, 24: 299.
- mineral content of, 20: 453.

**Sawdust, effect on—**

- ammonia accumulation from blood, 13: 309.
- growth of oats, 17: 202.
- growth of peas, 17: 205.
- nitrate content of soils, 17: 203.
- nitrification of ammonium sulfate, 13: 311.

**Seed weight, relation to growth, 15: 285.**

**Seeds—**

- absorption effect on, from salt-treated soils, 3: 271.
- absorption of ions by, 20: 249.
- absorption of salt solutions by, 11: 277; 20: 15.
- germination, as affected by—
  - fertilizers, 23: 335.
  - organic substances, 6: 333.
  - salt solution, 20: 15.
- germination of, in heated soils, 7: 1.
- longevity of *B. radicola* on legume, 7: 217.
- soaking of, 20: 32.
- sterilization of, with—
  - alcohol, 7: 241.
  - calcium hypochloride, 7: 219.
  - formalin, 6: 218.
  - hydrogen peroxide, 7: 219.
  - mercuric bichloride, 7: 219, 241.
  - sulfuric acid, 7: 241.

**Silica—**

- alumina ratio relation to base exchange, 25: 304.
- beneficial effects, on wheat, 7: 208.
- crucibles for potassium determination, 12: 419.
- colloidal absorption of—
  - calcium from calcium carbonate, 17: 265.
  - plant food by, 14: 441.
- colloids—
  - coagulation of, with iron sols, 17: 407.
  - prevalence of, in soil, 17: 404.
- effect on—
  - crop yield, 14: 237.
  - magnesia-induced toxicity, 19: 331.
  - phosphate availability in ferruginous soils, 17: 463.
  - phosphorus requirement by plants, 19: 195.
  - potash absorption by plants, 19: 195.
- gel—
  - calcium nitrate adsorption by, 14: 453.
  - calcium phosphate adsorption by, 14: 2.
  - calcium sulfate adsorption, 19: 126.
  - culture media, 8: 439, 447.
  - dialysis of, 7: 207.
  - heat of reaction between, and hydroxides, 23: 243.
  - potassium adsorption by, 14: 5, 451.
- in drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 176.
- in Nebraska soils, 1: 419.

**Silica—(continued)**

- nutrient solutions with, 7: 207.
- relation to—
  - heat of wetting, 19: 480.
  - plant growth, 14: 347; 22: 217.
  - sesqui-oxide ratio in lateritic soils, 21: 349, 360.
  - soluble and insoluble, as affected by climate, 1: 30.

**Silicate dicalcium, effect on acid soil, 10: 57.****Silicates—**

- acid, reactions in soil, 5: 192.
- carbonic acid reactions with, 8: 279.
- decomposition of, 18: 390.
- formation, composition and structure, 8: 276.
- relation to plant growth, 14: 347.
- salts, reaction of, with, 8: 279.

**Silicic acid—**

- inversion of sugar by, 5: 341.
- sol for enrichment cultures, 8: 445.
- yield increase due to, in the absence of phosphorus, 20: 354.

**Sodium—**

- absorption of, by soil, 17: 262.
- arsenite as toxic agent to wheat, 3: 342.
- carbonate—
  - absorption of, by soil, 9: 267.
  - as flocculating agent, 1: 589.
  - toxicity of, 7: 117.
- carbonate, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 452; 6: 469.
  - freezing-point depression, 19: 296.
  - nitrification by alkali soils, 4: 216; 6: 469.
  - nitrogen fixation, 6: 469.
  - physical condition of soil, 7: 116.
  - soybean growth, 1: 164.
  - vapor pressure of soil, 25: 416.
  - water absorption by seeds, 3: 274.
- chloride—
  - absorption of, by soil, 9: 267.
  - adsorptive action of filters on, 9: 45.
  - after-effects on soil, 12: 471.
  - as fertilizer, 7: 126.
  - as flocculating agent, 1: 588.
  - as soil amendment, 5: 450.
  - tolerance of plants for, 22: 303.
  - toxicity of, 2: 453; 7: 107; 8: 399.
- chloride, effect on—
  - alfalfa grown in solution cultures, 16: 183; 18: 353.

**Sodium—**chloride, effect on—*(continued)*

ammonification, 2: 452; 6: 467.

asparagus, 12: 449.

chemical composition of plants, 8: 398.

evaporation of water from soils, 9: 418.

nitrification, 4: 209; 6: 467.

nitrogen fixation, 6: 467.

nitrosomonas cultures, 8: 456.

physiological changes of living trees,  
8: 397.

plant growth, 23: 299.

potassium solubility, 6: 254.

soybean growth, 1: 164.

vapor pressure of soils, 25: 415.

water absorption by seeds, 3: 275.

weed eradication, 12: 457.

content of loess soil, 1: 299.

cyanide as killing agent for root-nematode,  
4: 486.hydroxide, effect on ammonia absorption,  
2: 321.

in—

drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 184.

rainwater, 15: 219.

Wyoming alkali soil, 4: 208.

nitrate—*see also* Fertilizers sodium nitrate,  
Nitrates.

availability in soils, 4: 345; 19: 467.

in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 183.

movement of, through limed and  
unlimed soils, 19: 462.

origin of, 19: 37.

nitrate, effect on—

acidic constituents of soils, 8: 313.

ammonification, 2: 452; 4: 366.

basic constituents of soils, 8: 313.

calcium leachings, 9: 241.

carbon dioxide evolution, 1: 86.

cellulose decomposition in soils, 17: 282.

composition of plants, 9: 240.

composition of soybeans, 6: 100.

liberation of soil acids, 6: 43.

nitrification, 4: 396.

nitrogen fixation, 9: 315.

nitrogen transformations in soils, 4:  
345

nodulation of soybeans, 17: 446.

oat juice acidity, 8: 239.

organic matter decomposition, 1: 89.

phosphorus extraction from soils, 17:  
53.

protein content of grain, 14: 105.

**Sodium—**nitrate, effect on—*(continued)*

respiration power of soils, 17: 151.

rock phosphate availability, 9: 241.

solubility of soil separates, 10: 233.

tobacco plants, 10: 487.

wheat plants, 23: 206.

nitrite, oxidation of, by microorganisms,  
17: 59.

phosphate, effect on—

B. radiculicola, 3: 85.

soybean growth, 1: 164.

salts, effect on—

ammonification, 2: 451.

orthoclase solubility, 15: 176.

phosphorus, water soluble and organic,  
7: 146.

potassium solubility in soil, 6: 252.

sulfate, effect on—

ammonification, 2: 452; 6: 470.

nitrification, 4: 210; 6: 470.

nitrogen fixation, 6: 470.

soybean growth, 1: 164.

vapor pressure of soils, 25: 416.

sulfate, toxicity of, 7: 111.

sulfide, oxidation of, in soils, 16: 484.

**Soil—*see also* Soils.**

absorption of—

plant-nutritive substances by, 25: 246.

rain water by, 25: 213.

salts at different water content in the,  
25: 247.sodium chloride and carbonate by, 9:  
267.acid—*see also* Soil acidity, Acid, H-ion  
concentration, Soil Reaction, Lime.

aluminum in, 6: 259.

ammonia extracted from an, 18: 411.

digestion with nitric acid, 15: 383.

effect on nitrogen content of soybeans,  
7: 455.

extraction of, 25: 25.

insoluble in, 1: 422.

nitrate formation in, 1: 317.

origin of, discussion, 8: 49.

soluble matter and ammonia absorption,  
2: 323.

studies, 11: 353, 363; 13: 449.

work on subject, 7: 197.

acid, as affected by—

dicalcium silicate, 10: 57.

heating, 6: 262.



**Soil—(continued)**

- acidity—*see also* Soil Reaction, Acid, Soils acid, Lime, H-ion concentration.
- adsorption theory of, 10: 157.
- aluminum as a factor in, 10: 153.
- apparatus for determining, 4: 139.
- conceptions on, 17: 435; 22: 213.
- contribution to the knowledge of, 17: 435, 436; 20: 358
- determination of, in mineral soils, 22: 214.
- hydrogen-ion studies, 12: 156.
- increase from east to west, 1: 422.
- lime and, 17: 465.
- mineral, 16: 203.
- mode of occurrence of, 6: 432.
- nature and cause of, discussion, 10: 155; 12: 156; 20: 285.
- neutralization, 4: 31.
- nitrate formation, as affected by, 1: 317.
- nitrification and, 4: 327.
- potential, 14: 223.
- problem, 20: 357; 21: 182.
- qualitative tests for, a comparison of methods, 18: 75.
- scientific study of, an introduction to the (book review), 25: 495.
- sourness, versus, 9: 211.
- acidity, as affected by—
  - air-drying, 4: 143.
  - alcohol, 3: 386.
  - ammonium sulfate, 3: 507.
  - carbonic acid, 5: 151.
  - cropping, 5: 155; 20: 356.
  - drying, 18: 81.
  - fertilization, 5: 155; 20: 356.
  - greenhouse conditions, 17: 219.
  - gypsum, 9: 456.
  - limestone fineness, 4: 19.
  - liming, 5: 155; 7: 275.
  - moisture, 18: 79
  - salt solution treatment, 11: 357.
  - sulfur oxidation, 6: 356.
- acidity, effect on—
  - calcium availability, 5: 174.
  - potato scab, 16: 69.
  - root tissues of plants, 5: 176.
  - symbiotic nitrogen-fixing bacteria, 5: 175.
- acidity, methods—*see also* Lime requirement methods, and Soil reaction methods.
- calcium acetate, 4: 123; 16: 79.

**Soil—****acidity, methods—(continued)**

- Comber test, 18: 75.
- field method, 16: 81.
- Hopkins, 6: 33.
- H-ion concentration, 15: 99; 18: 75, 333.
- Iowa test, 18: 75.
- Jones, 6: 33; 16: 79.
- MacIntire, 6: 33.
- modification of Truog, 16: 75.
- quick and simple, 17: 434.
- Rich or poor, 18: 75.
- soiltex, 18: 75.
- sugar inversion, 5: 333; 15: 99; 18: 333.
- Tacke, 6: 33.
- Truog, 6: 33; 15: 99; 16: 75; 18: 75; 333; 19: 445.
- Veitch, 6: 33.
- acidity, relation to—
  - acidity of plant juice, 7: 469; 8: 236.
  - aluminum hydrolysis, 8: 316.
  - bacterial activity, 12: 133.
  - base exchange, 21: 181, 289; 25: 25.
  - ecological factors, 16: 41.
  - ethyl-acetate hydrolysis, 15: 99.
  - lime, 17: 465.
  - lime requirement, 5: 181; 11: 272.
  - plant diseases, 5: 173.
  - plant distribution, 16: 41.
  - plant feeding power, 13: 461.
  - plant growth, 5: 169.
  - soil type, 18: 383.
  - soluble calcium of, 17: 213.
- acids—
  - activity of, 8: 41.
  - mineral, 8: 49.
  - organic, 8: 53.
  - strength of, methods of studying, 18: 331.
- actinomyces, *see* Actinomyces.
- aeration, as affected by air-barometric pressure changes, 18: 53.
- aeration, diffusion value as an indication of, 23: 425.
- aeration, effect on—
  - barley development, 17: 97.
  - clay, 17: 97.
  - incubation studies, 19: 393.
  - lime requirement of a muck, 9: 77.
- agriculture and, 5: 323.
- air, carbon dioxide content of, 17: 235; 20: 39; 23: 421; 24: 241.

**Soil—(continued)**

- air space, effect on moisture movement, 19: 296.
- alkali, *see* Alkali soils.
- alkalinity influencing ammonification, 4: 386.
- aluminum—*see also* Aluminum.
  - as affected by climate, 1: 34.
  - soluble salts of, 10: 158.
- amendments, action of some common, 6: 121.
- ammonia—*see also* Ammonia, Ammonification.
  - accumulation by actinomyces, 1: 105.
  - extraction of, 5: 481; 18: 263.
  - formation, 15: 59.
  - studies, 20: 353.
  - volatilization, 1: 77.
- ammonifying power of the, method for determining, 10: 364.
- analyses—
  - amino acid nitrogen, 5: 199.
  - fifth normal acid treatment, 8: 324.
  - hydrochloric acid extraction, 5: 412.
  - hydrochloric acid soluble portion of loess, 1: 303.
  - loss of ignition, 5: 199.
  - mechanical, 1: 304; 16: 363; 19: 3; 25: 10; *see also* Soil mechanical analyses methods of, 5: 199.
  - nitrate nitrogen, 5: 199.
  - of some California, 5: 408.
  - relation to crop producing power of soil, 5: 413.
  - soluble non-protein nitrogen, 5: 199.
  - value of, when limited to a single cropping system, 17: 457.
- antiseptic treatment of, *see* Antiseptic.
- antiseptics—
  - apparatus for the application of 1: 266.
  - efficiency of, 1: 264.
  - method of treating, 3: 356, 525.
  - volatile, 1: 267; 3: 353.
- antiseptics, effect on—
  - ammonification, 3: 377.
  - crop yield, 3: 357.
  - nitrification, 3: 377.
  - residual crops, 3: 363.
  - soil solution concentration, 3: 525.
- atmosphere, effect on—
  - carbonation of calcium hydroxide, 7: 409.
  - carbon dioxide in, 7: 261.

**Soil—(continued)**

- bacteria, *see* Bacteria, Microorganisms.
- bacterial activities of the, 13: 251, 303.
- bacterial, fertilizing preparations, 17: 19.
- bacteriological analysis, errors in, 2: 157.
- bacteriological analysis of, a comparison of methods, 11: 295.
- bases, *see* Base-exchange, Bases, Soils bases.
- biological—
  - activity in undisturbed, 16: 248.
  - changes, 3: 37.
  - data as criterion for fertility, 6: 449.
- biological activity, as affected by—
  - air-drying, 16: 255.
  - calcium carbonate, 16: 254.
  - calcium oxide, 16: 252.
  - carbon bisulfide, 16: 264.
  - heating, 16: 258.
  - organic matter, 16: 266.
  - tillage, 16: 252.
  - toluene, 16: 262.
- biological processes—
  - as affected by straw, 12: 233.
  - relation to cation concentration, 20: 269.
- biology and biochemistry, 25: 29.
- biology investigations, 2: 87.
- calcium, *see also* Calcium, Lime.
- calcium, as affected by—
  - cropping, 8: 36.
  - irrigation, 19: 94.
  - manure, 19: 94.
  - potash fertilizers, 16: 114.
- calcium, relation to—
  - acidity, 17: 213.
  - depth, 19: 452.
  - yields, 19: 450.
- capillary spaces and vapor pressure—25: 411; *see also* Capillary.
- carbon—
  - bisulfide behavior in, 10: 421.
  - changes, 1: 76.
  - dioxide, *see* Carbon dioxide.
  - in some Iowa, 6: 324.
  - in various types of, 13: 3.
  - inorganic, as affected by cropping, 8: 36.
  - nitrogen ratio in, 1: 49.
- carbon, as affected by—
  - irrigation 19: 89.
  - manure, 19: 89.
  - nitrogen treatment, 16: 115.
- catalytic power of the, 22: 407.

## Soil—(continued)

- cellulose—*see also* Cellulose.
  - decomposing power of toluene and calcium oxide treated, 16: 346.
  - effect on microorganisms in the, 16: 350.
- chemical composition—
  - influence on fungi, 2: 17.
  - physical and chemical properties related to, 20: 91.
  - physical classification and, 5: 414.
  - production and, 5: 412.
- chemical effect on, by—
  - calcium carbonate, 5: 379, 383.
  - calcium oxide, 5: 379, 383.
- chemistry—
  - investigations in Germany, 17: 431.
  - report of commission First International Soil Science Congress, 25: 23.
- chlorides, factors influencing the determination of, 9: 41; *see also* Chlorides.
- classes—
  - solubility of separates composing the, 10: 229.
  - water capacity of, 14: 378.
- classification—
  - American point of view on, 25: 61.
  - basis for, in tropical region, 21: 370.
  - chemical criteria for, 5: 405.
  - historical review of subject on, 25: 52.
  - in two classes, 5: 405.
  - moisture equivalent of soils grouped according to, 9: 160.
- cohesion, measurement of, 24: 373.
- Colby silt loam—
  - calcium carbonate influence on nitrification in, 1: 328.
  - nitrification in, 1: 321.
- colloids, 1: 10; 3: 423; *see also* Colloids.
  - absorption of calcium by, 25: 430.
  - absorption of plant food by, 14: 449.
  - ammonia absorption by, 20: 333.
  - analyses of, 25: 389.
  - coagulation of, with electrolytes, 3: 429; 17: 400.
  - charge on, method of determining, 17: 403.
  - clay as, 20: 89.
  - determination of, 24: 271.
  - discussion on, 25: 359.
  - dye absorption by, 20: 333.
  - flocculation of, 1: 585; 23: 489.
  - heat of wetting as a method of determining, 19: 153.

## Soil—

- colloids—(continued)
  - heat of wetting of, 20: 329.
  - hydrometer method for determining, 23: 319; 25: 474.
  - method of determining, 25: 367.
  - methods of obtaining, 3: 424.
  - organic and inorganic, relation to absorption, 17: 272.
  - reaction of, 8: 55.
  - replaceable bases and, 25: 422.
  - stability of, 19: 160.
  - suction force of, 20: 169; 24: 71.
  - suspensions as, 19: 407.
  - swelling of, 19: 408.
  - type of, 17: 404.
  - viscosity of, 19: 408.
  - water absorption by, 20: 333.
- colloids, as affected by—
  - dehydration, 25: 163, 239, 327.
  - H-ion concentration, 14: 449.
  - temperature, 19: 408.
- colloids, effect on—
  - availability of salts, 14: 1.
  - electrical conductivity of salts, 3: 423.
  - free and unfree water in soils, 18: 102.
  - heat of wetting of soils, 18: 101; 19: 477; 20: 332.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration, 18: 100.
  - soil properties, 18: 99.
  - vapor pressure of alkali soil extracts, 17: 405.
  - water relationships of soils, 18: 101.
- colloids, relation to—
  - phosphoric acid adsorption, 3: 106; 24: 465.
  - malaria, 5: 329.
  - mechanical analysis, 24: 272.
  - saturation with different bases, 20: 332.
  - suction force of, 20: 169.
- color as affected by—
  - carbonates, 22: 81.
  - changes due to climate, 1: 10.
  - moisture, 16: 275.
- compaction, effect on movement of salts, 19: 459.
- composition—
  - citric acid soluble fraction, 1: 306.
  - of Nebraska, 1: 424.
- composition, relation to—
  - age of drift, 11: 197.
  - climate, discussion, 3: 12.
  - depth of section, 11: 196.
  - type of soil, 11: 196.

## Soil—(continued)

- conditions, effect of, on bacterial life, 15: 329.
- conductivity method study on, 12: 172.
- constants, relation to bacterial activities, 10: 381.
- constituents—
  - as affected by sulfonation, 7: 183.
  - effect of tobacco cultivation on, 15: 386.
  - inhibiting plant toxins, 3: 333.
- core sampler, 21: 53.
- cultivated, bacterial flora in, 19: 163.
- cultivation, effect on—
  - carbon-bisulfide diffusion in, 10: 436.
  - nitrate formation, 12: 309.
- cultivation, studies on, 20: 358.
- cultures, 3: 339; *see also* Nutrient solutions.
  - apparatus used for, 13: 145.
  - composition of various plants grown in, 17: 233.
  - fertilizer nutrients in, for barley, wheat, oats, 19: 169.
  - growth of barley in, with ammonium sulfate, 5: 421.
  - toxicity of monobasic phosphate in, 5: 89.
- cylinder experiments, 7: 247; 12: 1.
- decomposition of clover tops in, 9: 137.
- density of, 23: 73.
- depths, carbon dioxide production at different, 23: 424.
- dilatometer studies, 18: 118.
- dispersed material in the profile, 23: 391.
- dispersion of, and replaceable bases, 25: 419.
- distillation of, 7: 63.
- dynamometer for measuring resistance of, 25: 18.
- elutriator, description of a new, 9: 191.
- enrichment, composition of sweet clover as related to, 22: 83.
- erosion experiments, 21: 402.
- experiment fields and their value, 14: 369.
- extract—
  - alcoholic, in water cultures for oats, 3: 370.
  - ammonia in, due to heating of, 7: 51.
  - bicarbonates in, 25: 274.
  - clear, by the use of colloidal iron, 9: 132.
  - composition changes of, due to manure, 7: 259.
  - collodion sacks, use of, in getting clear, 23: 13.

## Soil—

## extract—(continued)

- corn grown in, 24: 137.
- dialysis of, 18: 4.
- freezing point changes due to heating, 7: 66.
- freezing-point lowering of plants grown in, 3: 127.
- inversion of cane-sugar by, 7: 199.
- method of preparation, 2: 398; 4: 199.
- neutral salt, 23: 133.
- phosphate content, 20: 154; 21: 425; 24: 109.
- potassium nitrate, analysis of, 18: 4.
- specific resistance of, 23: 21.
- toxic factors in, 6: 264.

## extraction of—

- with ammonia, 6: 376.
- with volatile antiseptics, 3: 355.

## fallow—

- alkali recovery from, 18: 464.
- displaced solution from, 18: 154.
- microbial activities in, 19: 421.
- nitrate in, 12: 309.
- nitrogen losses in, 9: 58.
- speed of carbonation in, 7: 416.
- sulfate production in, 21: 238.

## ferrous sulfate treatment of, 13: 55.

## fertility—

- calcium significance in, 10: 1.
- colloidal behavior and, 20: 169; 21: 181.
- Greece, 13: 63.
- limestone factor in, 4: 19.
- maintaining, by drying soils, 18: 419.
- microbiological analysis of soil as an index of, 14: 81, 283, 321; 15: 49, 241; 16: 55; 17: 141, 257, 379; 22: 407.
- nitrification as a factor of, 3: 399.
- oats straw in a system of, 21: 393.
- prediction of, from biological data, 6: 449.
- protozoan theory of, discussion, 3: 225.
- report of commission, First International Soil Science Congress, 25: 51.
- respiration and, 23: 443.
- sulfur an element of, 11: 60; 14: 421.

## fertility, as affected by—

- alfalfa growth, 8: 1.
- drying, 18: 419.
- grain crops, 8: 1.
- liming, 17: 222.
- partial sterilization, 3: 357; 16: 137, 247, 343; 18: 419.

## Soil—(continued)

- fertility, relation to—
  - acidity, 5: 170.
  - base, 5: 351.
  - humus content, 3: 515.
  - iron forms in the, 23: 165.
  - lime applications, 17: 220.
  - lime requirement of plants, 5: 183.
  - manganese forms in the, 23: 165.
  - mononchs, 3: 481.
- flora—see also Bacteria.
  - cultivated, 19: 163.
  - forest, 1: 373.
  - microscopic study of, 25: 269.
  - relation to acidity, 6: 431.
  - studies, 16: 475; 21: 143; 24: 39.
  - virgin, 19: 163.
- flora, as affected by—
  - leaching, 1: 291.
  - lime fineness, 19: 271.
  - petroleum, 14: 465.
  - sterilization, 7: 3.
  - sulfur oxidation, 14: 247; 21: 245.
- forming agencies, a discussion, 11: 162.
- frozen, bacterial types occurring in, 21: 225.
- fumigation—see also Soil insecticide.
  - carbon bisulfide, use of, in, 10: 15; 12: 43.
  - chloroform for, 12: 49.
  - mustard oil for, 12: 49.
  - paradichlorobenzene for, 11: 305.
  - sodium ethyl xanthate for, 12: 46.
  - temperature effects on, 10: 21.
- fungi—see also Fungi, Ammonification.
  - action of, 16: 207.
  - associative action with bacteria, 2: 44.
  - development of, in heated soils, 7: 36.
  - factors influencing activity of, 2: 1.
  - flora, 3: 565.
  - growth of, 14: 153.
  - importance of, 6: 137.
  - inoculation and incubation of, 1: 381.
  - isolation from, 3: 571.
  - microscopic method for demonstrating, 14: 149.
  - morphology, of, 2: 139.
  - nitrogen-fixation by, 6: 141.
  - number of, in, 2: 115; 3: 53, 571; 14: 98.
  - occurrence of, in, 6: 138; 16: 207; 25: 433.
  - relation to bacteria, 19: 301.
  - role of, in fertility of, 8: 267.

## Soil—

- fungi—(continued)
  - taxonomy of, 2: 115.
  - use of nitrates by, 5: 375.
  - utilization of ammonium phosphate by, 5: 18.
- fungi, as affected by—
  - carbon bisulfide, 19: 302.
  - cropping, 19: 423.
  - depth of, 25: 437.
  - heat, 7: 36; 16: 151.
  - moisture content, 25: 437.
  - organic matter, 17: 373.
  - toluene, 16: 151.
- glacial, studies, 11: 161; 23: 57, 73.
- grains, colloids as coating on, 21: 481.
- granulation, influence of water on, 18: 103.
- greenhouse, absorbing materials from, 2: 96.
- grinding of, effect on solubility, 10: 232.
- hardpan—
  - iron depositing bacteria as a factor of, 23: 467.
  - nature of, 23: 225.
- humus—see also Humus.
  - as affected by climate, 1: 36.
  - nitrogen problem in arid, 1: 285.
  - relation to protozoa, 1: 150.
- ignition, effect on heat of wetting, 18: 121.
- improvement, the lime factor in, 9: 83, 91.
- inoculation, review, 6: 203.
- insecticide tests, 10: 61; 12: 43, 63.
- insects, methods of control, 10: 15; 12: 63.
- investigations, handbook of, (book review), 22: 391.
- iron, see Iron.
- leaching, effect on—see also Leaching, Lysimeters.
  - ammonification, 1: 292.
  - flora of, 1: 291.
  - lime content of, 23: 478.
  - nitrification, 1: 293.
- legume bacteria movement in, 14: 29.
- magnesium, see Magnesium.
- malarial, study on, 5: 323.
- map of Europe, 25: 73.
- mapping, status of subject on, 25: 59.
- material, particle size of, a statistical study of distribution, 17: 469.
- mechanical analysis—
  - apparatus for, 16: 363.
  - discussion, 25: 10.

## Soil—

- mechanical analysis—(*continued*)
  - dispersion of, and, 25: 419.
  - experimental methods of, 19: 15.
  - Johnson's automatic balance for, 19: 21.
  - mathematical theory of distribution curve in, 19: 3.
  - multiple-mouthed pipette for, 19: 29.
  - Oden apparatus for, 19: 19.
  - Oden-Keen balance for, 19: 20.
  - Protolongo arrangement for, 19: 22.
  - Robinson method for, 19: 29.
  - Schloesing experimental arrangement for the study of, 19: 17.
  - Stokes' equation in the study of, 19: 10.
  - Wiegner-Gessner apparatus for, 19: 24.
  - Zunker apparatus for, 19: 26.
- mechanical composition influence on fungi, 2: 17.
- mechanics, 22: 240; 25: 9.
- microbiology—*see also* Bacteria, Soil Bacteria.
  - methods, 19: 234; 25: 37.
  - methods of investigating (book review), 23: 495.
  - note on, and possible existence of invisible germs in, 12: 409.
  - principles of, (book review), 23: 494.
  - review of, in 1924, 19: 201.
- microorganisms—*see also* Microorganisms, Bacteria, Fungi.
  - condition favoring development of, in heated, 7: 74.
  - methods of study of members, 14: 283.
  - nitrate assimilation by, in relation to energy supply, 24: 79.
  - plate method for determining number of, 14: 27.
  - transformation of nitrates by, 4: 417.
- microorganisms, as affected by—
  - calcium oxide, 16: 344.
  - cellulose, 16: 350.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration of, 20: 358.
  - sodium nitrate, 4: 388.
  - toluene, 16: 344.
- mineral transformation, as affected by fungi, 6: 151.
- mineralogy (book review), 24: 297.
- minerals, as affected by—
  - chemical agents, 15: 19.
  - sulfur oxidation, 18: 317.
- minerals, availability of, 15: 9.
- modulus of rupture, 24: 375.

Soil—(*continued*)

- moisture—*see also* Moisture, Soils moisture, Water.
  - capacity, 23: 303.
  - classification of, 11: 33; 13: 43.
  - constants, its relation to capillary potential, 10: 357.
  - contents, relation to unfree water, 11: 255.
  - critical content-residue of, 9: 479.
  - holding capacity, Hilgard method of determining, 10: 364.
  - mathematical development of problem of, 11: 220.
  - movement of, 11: 215.
  - movement of, by capillarity, 7: 313.
  - movement of initial, effect on moisture movement, 10: 143.
  - properties of, 17: 423.
- moisture, as affected by—
  - lime, 22: 71.
  - mulching with paper, 22: 53.
- moisture, effect on—
  - ammonia distribution, 2: 330.
  - carbon-bisulfide diffusion, 10: 424.
  - fumigation of, 11: 311.
  - fungi, 2: 17.
  - nitrate formation, 2: 201.
  - nitrification, 23: 141.
  - plow draft, 21: 282.
  - potato scab, 16: 69.
  - protozoa, 2: 173.
- moisture, relation to—
  - color of, 16: 275.
  - germination of barley, 5: 462.
  - light, 22: 233.
  - mulching, 14: 303.
  - physiological salt balance for plants, 14: 391.
  - protein content of wheat, 18: 173.
  - salts added, 19: 287.
  - solution obtained from, 3: 537.
  - yield of wheat, 18: 173.
- moisture-equivalent, *see* Moisture-equivalent.
- mulch—
  - discussion, 23: 316.
  - nitrate accumulation under, 14: 301; 24: 177.
- mulching paper on, 22: 35.
- nitrates, *see* Nitrates, Nitrate, Soils nitrate.
- nitrifying organisms, 3: 404.

**Soil—(continued)**

## nitrifying power—

calcium oxide effects, 16: 345.

depth of, 18: 226.

determination of, 19: 81.

method of determining, 10: 365.

study of, 12: 320.

toluene effects, 16: 345.

nitrogen—*see also* Nitrogen, Nitrogen fixation.

acid-hydrolysis extract, 3: 325.

amide, 1: 524.

available, as indicated by sorghum, 17: 315.

available, relation to wheat yield, 18: 173.

changes 1: 76.

distribution of, in the podzol profile, 20: 177.

economy in the, 10: 249.

exploiting the, 20: 353.

fixing power, method of determining, 10: 365.

forms of, 1: 520.

gain in, 6: 205.

losses, 1: 76; 12: 1.

maintenance of, in acid, 4: 460.

nitric, factors influencing, 4: 179.

nitrous in irrigated, 3: 149.

non-protein, in, 6: 441.

organic matter, *see* Organic matter.

protein content of wheat and, 18: 173.

ratio to phosphoric acid extracted by various methods, 3: 107.

recovery from, 1: 501; 4: 292; 19: 70.

soluble, accumulation of, due to heating, 16: 151.

studies, 20: 353.

surface, as affected by cropping, 8: 24.

symbiotic nitrogen, fixation and, 9: 275.

transformations, 4: 345.

## nitrogen, as affected by—

climate, 1: 37, 41; 8: 25.

cropping, 8: 25.

cultivation, 4: 283.

depth of, 1: 219.

fertilizer treatment, 18: 87.

grass and weeds, 4: 283.

gypsum, 9: 457.

heat, 5: 197; 16: 151.

lime, 15: 325.

limestone fineness, 4: 25.

nitrogen treatment, 16: 115.

straw, 12: 235.

**Soil—(continued)**

## nitrogen in—

humus from arid region, 1: 285.

humus from loess, 1: 239.

loess, 1: 197.

various types of, 13: 3.

Wyoming alkali, 4: 208.

## nutrients, as affected by—

calcium carbonate, oxide and sulfate, 13: 449.

continuous cropping, 11: 321.

growing plants, 25: 273.

nutrients, deficiency, seedling plant method for determining, 23: 455.

odor of, 7: 62.

organic acids in, 8: 53.

organic matter, *see* Organic matter.

organic, profile study of, 18: 117.

oxidizing power of, 10: 29.

## oxidation—

processes in the, 13: 139.

rocks and minerals, 15: 19.

## particles—

concentration of solution around, 11: 131.

diagram showing fall of, 19: 12.

size distribution of, 19: 1.

pentosan destruction in, 15: 482.

percolates, H-ion concentration of, 17: 103.

phosphoric acid—*see also* Phosphorus Phosphoric Acid.

as affected by climate, 1: 35, 41.

combination with humifying organic substances, 3: 108.

## phosphorus—

content of some Iowa soils, 6: 324; 13: 119.

extraction of, by acids as an indication of need of, 17: 459.

forms of, 25: 143.

in bluegrass, 2: 387.

organic, 2: 291; 6: 321, 365; 10: 127; 13: 119; 16: 281; 24: 109, 119.

retention of, by colloids, 24: 465.

review of subject on, 6: 284; 17: 459.

solubility of, in soil-acid phosphate mixtures, 19: 399.

studies, 24: 109, 119.

## phosphorus, as affected by—

aluminum salts, 18: 469.

cropping, 8: 35.

iron salts, 18: 469.

irrigation, 19: 91.



**Soil—**

- phosphorus as affected by—(*continued*)
  - manure, 19: 91.
  - nitrogen treatment, 16: 115.
- physics investigations in Germany, 17: 430; 25: 9.
- plant relationships, 22: 31.
- plowing of, as affected by treatment, 21: 277.
- plowing in fall, relation to composition of plants, 22: 87.
- points, porous porcelain, for determining water supplying power of, 9: 472.
- polders, studies of, 17: 434.
- potassium—*see also* Potassium.
  - biological measurement of available, 24: 345.
  - fertilization, 25: 47.
  - lysimeter leachings, 8: 337.
  - removal of, by crops, 22: 335.
  - replacement of, 17: 91.
  - solubility of, as influenced by sulfur, and gypsum, 22: 335.
  - solubility of, in salt solutions, 6: 237.
- potassium, as affected by—
  - calcium treatment, 8: 337.
  - climate, 1: 32, 42.
  - fertilizer treatment, 16: 112.
  - magnesium treatment, 8: 337.
- potassium, liberation of, by—
  - calcium and magnesium additions, 16: 217.
  - fertilizer treatment, 16: 389.
- problems, interpretation of, by means of solution cultures, 16: 385.
- productivity—
  - as affected by volatile antiseptics treatment, 3: 354.
  - bacterial numbers and nitrification, a correlation, 16: 63.
- profile—
  - acidity of podzol, 20: 178.
  - forest studies on, 19: 45.
  - horizon zonation in, of tropical soils, 21: 353.
  - moisture equivalent in horizons of, 20: 178.
  - nitrogen distribution in the podzol 20: 177.
  - organic, study of, 18: 117.
  - reaction of forest, 19: 46.
  - studies in Michigan, 16: 95; 18: 181; 23: 391.

**Soil—**

- profile—(*continued*)
  - volume-weight of soils as a physical characteristic of, 25: 207.
  - water removal from, 20: 245.
- protozoa, *see* Protozoa.
- protozoology, methods in study, 3: 231; *see also* Protozoa.
- puddling of, as influenced by freezing, 25: 411.
- reaction—*see also* Soil acidity, Lime requirement, H-ion concentration.
  - adjusting the, to the crop, 7: 181; 10: 301.
  - ammonification by fungi and, 1: 541.
  - factors influencing the, 9: 28.
  - litmus method, discussion, 4: 170; 16: 91.
  - methods, comparison, 4: 156; 15: 29.
  - organic phosphorus content and, 10: 136.
  - quinhydrone electrode and, 24: 453.
  - studies, a note on, 15: 473.
- reaction, as affected by—
  - acids and alkalies, 14: 224.
  - calcium lime versus magnesium lime, 18: 169.
  - calcium silicate, 22: 459.
  - carbonate content, 8: 327.
  - climate, 1: 38.
  - colloids, 8: 55.
  - fungi, 6: 150.
  - green manure decomposition, 9: 27.
  - gypsum, 12: 433; 15: 151.
  - neutral salt treatment, 21: 71.
  - organic matter, 6: 413; 12: 145.
  - replacement of bases, 25: 388.
  - various forms of lime, 5: 380.
- reaction, effect on—
  - alfalfa growth, 10: 301.
  - availability of ammonium sulfate, 3: 487.
  - biological, chemico-physical soil factors, 22: 216.
  - phosphate availability in ferruginous soils, 17: 463.
  - quality of timber, 19: 52.
  - sulfur oxidation, 10: 327.
- reaction, relation to—
  - active aluminum, 24: 205.
  - calcium content, 17: 181.
  - chernozem, 1: 432.
  - crop productivity, 14: 24.

**Soil—**

- reaction, relation to—(*continued*)
  - German soils, 20: 357.
  - incidence of certain woody plant species, 25: 133.
  - lime requirement, 13: 344.
- relation of, to potato scab, 17: 438.
- respiration, 23: 417, 427, 431.
- rocks forming, effect of chemical agents on, 15: 19.
- "Roterde"—
  - characterization of, 20: 361.
  - studies on, 22: 213.
- salicylic aldehyde in, 2: 97.
- sampler, a new type of, 25: 237.
- sampler for bacteriological and chemical study, 4: 109.
- samples for bacteriological tests, 6: 131.
- sampling methods, 9: 65.
- sampling method for bacteria in, 1: 367.
- science—
  - congress, 25: 3, 5, 83, 85.
  - fundamentals of (book review), 23: 493.
  - journal for, 1: 3.
- separates—
  - basic exchange between, and salt solutions, 11: 353.
  - solubility of, 10: 229.
- series, relation to—
  - H-ion concentration, 18: 65.
  - lime requirement, 18: 65.
- shrinkage, 24: 379.
- sickness, discussion, 3: 213, 222.
- silicates, *see* Silicates.
- silt clay loam, analysis of mineral constituents, 15: 1.
- solution—
  - acids and alkalies in, affecting bacteria, 3: 289.
  - aluminum in, 18: 1; 20: 181.
  - analyses, utility of data on, 24: 69.
  - analysis of, 14: 202; 18: 154, 160.
  - calcium in, 14: 199; 17: 215; 18: 154, 160.
  - clarification of, for chloride determination, 9: 44.
  - composition and concentration of, 3: 113; 5: 388.
  - composition of from serpentine soils, 22: 292.
  - composition of, of successive portions of displaced solution, 12: 214.

**Soil—**

- solution—(*continued*)
  - concentration around the soil particle, 11: 131.
  - concentration effects on freezing-point lowering, 9: 219, 420.
  - concentration in heated, 7: 65.
  - conductivity, 3: 541; 14: 202; 20: 271; 21: 428.
  - discussion on, 25: 46.
  - freezing-point depression of the, 12: 215; 13: 48.
  - geochemical classification of solutes in, 16: 467.
  - importance of, 3: 532, 543.
  - iron in, 18: 1.
  - magnesium in, 14: 199; 18: 154, 160.
  - manganese in, 18: 1.
  - nature and changes of the, 18: 163.
  - nitrates in, 15: 238; 18: 154, 160.
  - organic matter in, 15: 238.
  - organic phosphorus in, 25: 147.
  - osmotic concentration of, 5: 421, 440; 15: 238.
  - phosphates in, 15: 238; 16: 379; 21: 425; 25: 144.
  - phosphorus in, 3: 540; 24: 109, 119.
  - physiological aspect of, 16: 377.
  - properties of, 3: 538.
  - reaction of, 14: 202; 18: 154, 160; 20: 292; 22: 213.
  - replaceable calcium in, 25: 402.
  - solubility of lead arsenate in, 14: 115.
  - specific gravity, 3: 541.
  - sterilization effects on total solids in, 1: 261.
  - water extract and, by displacement comparison, 12: 218; 14: 191.
- solution, as affected by—
  - ammonium oxalate, 25: 148.
  - calcium carbonate, oxide and sulfate, 13: 452; 15: 75.
  - cropping, 18: 158.
  - fallowing, 18: 157.
  - ferrous sulfate treatment, 13: 55.
  - fertilizer chemicals, 15: 75; 16: 442; 21: 425.
  - liming, 17: 215; 21: 425.
  - seasonal changes, 18: 151.
  - sterilization by heat or antiseptics, 3: 525.
  - sulfur oxidation, 25: 152.

**Soil—(continued)**

- solution, effect on—
  - calcium carbonate solubility, 15: 75.
  - freezing-point lowering of roots and tops, 9: 219.
  - reaction of plant juices, 9: 366.
- solution, methods—
  - artificial root, 3: 534.
  - centrifuge, 3: 534.
  - displacement, 3: 534; 12: 211; 13: 48; 16: 465; 21: 426.
  - discussion of, 12: 197.
  - drainage water, 3: 533.
  - freezing-point, 12: 221; 13: 434.
  - Lipman pressure, 13: 55; 14: 191.
  - of analysis, 3: 150.
  - oil pressure, 3: 531.
  - Parker method modified, 20: 293.
  - soil extract, 3: 533.
  - vacuum, 15: 235.
- solution, relation to—
  - displaced solutions, 18: 153.
  - plant growth, 15: 229.
- sourness of, versus acidity, 9: 211.
- sterilization—
  - alterations in, due to, 1: 259.
  - changes in, caused by, 7: 3.
  - chemical injury due to, 7: 35.
  - methods, 7: 1.
  - microbiological activity and, 16: 137, 247, 343; 24: 149.
  - nitrites in, due to, 25: 395.
  - pigmentation in plants due to, 7: 34.
  - review of subject, 3: 197; 7: 1; 13: 171.
  - theories of, 7: 4.
- sterilization, effect on—
  - bacterial numbers, 2: 275; 6: 337.
  - concentration of, solution, 3: 525.
  - crop yield, 3: 357.
  - fertility of, 3: 227; 18: 430.
- sterilization, relation to—
  - fungi, 24: 149.
  - protozoa, 1: 150; 24: 149.
- storage, effect on—
  - biological changes, 3: 37.
  - seed germination, 7: 18.
- structure, as affected by—
  - lime, 22: 71, 215.
  - mechanical treatments, 25: 409.
  - phosphates, 22: 215.
  - sulfur oxidation, 13: 221.
- structure, relation to—
  - climate, 1: 9.
  - protozoa, 1: 150.

**Soil—(continued)**

- structure, theory of, 17: 16.
- sulfur oxidizing power of, 1: 339.
- surface—
  - behavior of, to sterilization, 7: 26.
  - mechanism of internal, inhibiting toxic effects, 7: 119.
- suspension—
  - degree of dispersion, factors influencing, 23: 379.
  - effect on sulfate solubility, 17: 65.
  - preparation of, by the Wiegner-Gessner apparatus, 23: 377.
- teaching, conference on, 10: 247.
- temperature—
  - electrical resistance thermometer for study of, 22: 454.
  - method of measuring, 14: 385; 22: 447; 25: 187.
  - relation to atmospheric temperature, 22: 447.
- temperature, as affected by—
  - light, 22: 239.
  - mulching paper, 22: 37.
- temperature, effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 59.
  - carbon-bisulfide diffusion, 10: 424.
  - corn seedlings, 3: 393.
  - fumigation in, 11: 313.
  - fungi, 2: 35.
  - nitrification, 23: 148.
- texture, as affected by—
  - adsorption, 15: 273.
  - carbonates, 22: 80.
- texture, effect on—
  - moisture utilization, 21: 209.
  - rate of water evaporation, 9: 431.
  - soybean oil content, 6: 97.
- texture, relation to type of distribution of rainfall, 24: 235.
- titanium, effects on phosphorus determination, 4: 308.
- toxicity, *see* Toxins, Toxicity.
- treatment—
  - clover composition related to, 22: 92.
  - volatile antiseptics, 3: 353.
- type, relation to—
  - Azotobacter flora, 8: 265.
  - bacteriological study of a, 25: 263.
  - carbon-bisulfide diffusion, 10: 427.
  - composition of, 11: 196.
  - germination of seeds in presence of fertilizer excess, 5: 70.
  - gypsum effects, 15: 155.

## Soil—

- type, relation to—(*continued*)
  - hydrogen-ion concentration, 18: 65.
  - lime requirement, 18: 65.
  - nitrogen and ash content of crops, 17: 438.
  - nitrogen forms applied, 23: 137.
  - plant indicators, 13: 411.
  - sauerkraut quality, 24: 301.
- types—
  - carbonate concentration in two Minnesota, 22: 75.
  - characterization of, by absorbed bases, 17: 429.
  - nitrogen and carbon in various, 13: 3.
  - plant distribution on, 16: 50.
  - plant indicators of, 13: 411.
- unsaturation of, method of determining, 21: 183; 23: 129.
- vanilin experiments, 2: 97.
- variability as determined by statistical methods, 17: 343.
- variability of, in relation to number of microorganisms, 14: 92.
- virgin—
  - bacterial flora in, 19: 163.
  - nitrites in, 12: 309.
  - versus cultivated, relation to fertility elements, 8: 1.
- volatile antiseptics, effect on, 3: 355, 372.
- volume—
  - apparatus for determination, 4: 264.
  - determination of water on basis of, 4: 263.
- water—*see also* Water.
  - absorbing power, 25: 417.
  - content and soil solution, 3: 113.
  - determination of, on volume basis, 4: 263.
  - effect on  $\gamma$ -mannite decomposition, 15: 331.
  - film, thickness of, 17: 15.
  - ratio, studies in relation to anion solubility, 12: 266.
  - supplying power and wilting of plants, 9: 469.
  - translocation of, in, 3: 119.
  - unfree, at different moisture contents, 11: 255.
- water-soluble salts, *see* Water-soluble matter, Salts.
- yeasts, occurrence of, 23: 33.

Soils—*see also* Soil.

- abnormality of, in field placed cylinder experiments, 7: 247.
- absorption of—
  - ammonia, 6: 410.
  - ammonium sulfate, 3: 561.
  - bases, 17: 255.
- acid—*see also* Soil acidity, Acid, Acids, H-ion concentration.
  - active, aluminum in, 15: 131.
  - growth of plants in, 22: 217.
  - manganese toxicity and, 8: 69.
  - plant injuries in, 20: 357.
  - reaction between lime-water and, 9: 151.
  - vegetation tests with, 15: 124.
- acid, as affected by—
  - aluminum and iron, 25: 345.
  - calcium carbonate, oxide and sulfates, 13: 449; 18: 279.
  - calcium salts, 18: 279.
  - limestone, 10: 176; 18: 279.
  - phosphates, 18: 279.
  - potassium nitrate leaching, 10: 182.
  - sodium salts, 18: 279.
  - various treatments, 20: 79.
- acid, effect on—
  - calcium compounds, 11: 363.
  - nodule-forming bacteria, 15: 37.
  - residual carbonates, 15: 297.
  - reversion of acid phosphate, 15: 367.
- adobe, absorption of nutrients from, by plants, 15: 189.
- adsorption by, 5: 345.
- adsorption power of, 5: 349; 17: 428.
- aeration of, affecting water movement, 4: 239.
- air-dry, movement of salts and moisture in, 19: 288.
- alkali, *see* Alkali.
- aluminum, *see* Aluminum.
- ammonia—*see also* Ammonia, Ammonium.
  - absorption by, 2: 305.
  - distillation by aeration, 6: 406.
  - distribution of, in, 2: 305, 328.
  - losses from, 1: 90.
  - method of determining, 18: 255, 409.
  - nitrogen content, 3: 405.
  - recovery of, 2: 312.
  - retention by, 6: 405.
- ammonifying power of—
  - agricultural, 19: 84.
  - method for determining, 10: 364.

**Soils—(continued)**

- amphoteric character of, 5: 349.
- arid—
  - availability of nitrogenous fertilizers in, 2: 575.
  - comparison with humid, 1: 433.
  - replaceable bases in, 25: 379.
- ascomycetes in, 3: 579.
- azotobacter in Hawaiian, 2: 183.
- barium in Nebraska, 1: 420.
- bases—*see also* Bases, Base exchange.
  - absorbing capacity of, by, 25: 175.
  - acid-forming, 25: 239.
  - adsorbed, method of determining, 15: 269.
  - dehydration effects on, 25: 178.
  - exchange of, 25: 421.
  - extracted from, 6: 379.
  - manganese as one of the active, 25: 357.
  - removed from, 3: 280.
  - replaceable, 25: 379.
  - replaceable, method of determining, 21: 183.
- basic, acidity of, 16: 195.
- buffer in, 4: 168; 12: 153; 14: 220; 18: 392.
- burning effects on ammonia absorption, 2: 324.
- calcium, *see* Calcium.
- carbon black action on, 2: 93.
- carbon content of experimental cylinder, 12: 14.
- carbon dioxide, *see* Carbon dioxide.
- carbon-nitrogen ratio, *see* Carbon-nitrogen ratio.
- carbonation of burnt lime in, 7: 325.
- cation concentration in, 20: 269.
- cellulose—*see also* Cellulose.
  - bacteria in California, 1: 442.
  - decomposing capacity, 16: 346.
  - decomposition in, 1: 437.
- chemical analysis, notes on, 15: 6.
- chemical composition of some, 5: 395.
- chemical effect of salts on, 11: 139.
- chemical properties and chemical composition of, 21: 349.
- chernozem—
  - comparison of, with loess of Nebraska, 1: 255, 313.
  - organic carbon in, 1: 233.
  - phosphate influence on, 25: 463
  - properties of, 1: 200.

**Soils—(continued)**

- climate, effect on—
  - nitrogen content of, in arid, 8: 25.
  - nitrogen content of, in humid, 8: 25.
  - nitrogen content of, in sub-humid, 8: 25.
- concentration of, as related to cell sap, 9: 220.
- contraction of, when wetted, 23: 119.
- cropped, formation of soluble material in, 7: 253.
- cultivated—
  - analyses of, 8: 4.
  - calcium content of, 8: 323.
  - magnesium content of, 8: 323.
- dematiaceae, 3: 584.
- drift, in Minnesota, 11: 161.
- drying, effect on—
  - absorption of ammonia, 2: 324.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration, 13: 327; 16: 121; 23: 402; 25: 388.
  - water-soluble constituents, 13: 173.
- effect on climate, 1: 5.
- electrodialysis of, 24: 291.
- expansion of, when wetted, 23: 119.
- ferrofication in, 2: 549.
- ferruginous, availability of phosphates in, 17: 463.
- flocculation of, with sulfur, 25: 450.
- forest—
  - bacteria in, 1: 373.
  - profile studies of, 19: 45.
  - studies of, 23: 57; 24: 351; 25: 75.
- freezing apparatus for, 12: 171.
- freezing of, effect on puddling, 25: 411.
- freezing-point lowering of, studies, 9: 217; 11: 132.
- greenhouse, soluble calcium and acidity in, 17: 219.
- gypsum, *see* Gypsum.
- hardpan formation in acid clay, 20: 307; 23: 205.
- Hawaiian, soil solution of, 18: 1.
- heat of wetting, *see* Heat of wetting.
- heated—
  - effect on seed germination and plant growth, 7: 1.
  - review of subject, 13: 171.
  - water extracts of, 7: 42.
- humid—
  - nitrogen in, 8: 33.
  - properties of, in the tropics and temperate climate, 21: 349.
  - replaceable bases in, 25: 379.

## Soils—(continued)

- hydrogen-ion concentration—*see also* Acidity, Soil acidity, H-ion concentration, Soil reaction.
- colorimetric determination, 4: 315; 9: 115.
- comparison of, in widely separated, 15: 407.
- effect on alfalfa, 25: 404.
- electrometric measurements in, 4: 168.
- factors affecting the, 23: 399.
- measured on extracts cleared with iron, 9: 133.
- method of adjusting, in, 10: 302.
- of potassium nitrate extract, 13: 93.
- of, treated with various forms of lime, 5: 380.
- quinhydrone electrode for measuring the, 21: 167.
- studies, 8: 47, 318; 14: 223; 21: 167.
- hydrogen-ion concentration, as affected by—
  - aluminum sulfate, 8: 319.
  - boiling suspensions of, 7: 198.
  - carbonic acid, 20: 285.
- drying, 13: 327; 16: 121; 23: 402; 25: 388.
- fertilizer treatment, 23: 407.
- lamp-black used to clarify soil, 25: 135.
- ratio of soil to water, 6: 228; 20: 285; 21: 175.
- starch additions, 25: 358.
- storing, 9: 36; 16: 121.
- type of, 4: 313; 6: 219, 232.
- hydrogen-ion concentration, relation to—
  - crop productivity, 14: 22.
  - hardpan formation, 20: 307.
  - incidence of some woody-plant species, 25: 133.
  - lime requirement, 13: 7; 16: 79.
  - rainfall, 23: 404.
  - root distribution, 16: 49.
- hydrometer method for studying, 25: 365, 473; *see also* Hydrometer.
- hygroscopic coefficient, *see* Hygroscopic coefficient.
- hygroscopicity of, 20: 359.
- ignited, phosphorus in, 6: 392.
- ignited, effect on—
  - physical properties of, 17: 135.
  - unfree water of, 17: 138.
- inorganic constituents of Nebraska, 1: 405.

## Soils—(continued)

- inversion of cane sugar by, 5: 333; 7: 199.
- iron in Nebraska, 1: 418.
- irrigated—*see also* Irrigation.
  - moisture properties of, 8: 303.
  - nitric nitrogen in, 12: 321.
  - nitrous nitrogen in, 3: 149.
- lime—*see also* Lime, Calcium carbonate.
  - affecting plant juices, 7: 470.
  - in Nebraska, 1: 418.
  - laterite, of Formosa island, 13: 425.
- loess—
  - characteristics of, 3: 11.
  - color of, 1: 239.
  - humus in, 1: 239.
  - humus-nitrogen in, 1: 239.
  - inorganic constituents of, 1: 405.
  - mechanical composition, 1: 405.
  - of Nebraska, 1: 197, 239, 299, 405; 2: 377; 3: 9.
  - phosphoric acid in, 1: 299.
  - potash in, 1: 299.
  - soda in, 1: 299.
- magnesium—
  - in Nebraska, 1: 415.
  - infertility of, 22: 291.
- manganese in Nebraska, 1: 420.
- manganiferous, chlorosis of pineapples grown on, 16: 269.
- mechanical analysis of, method, 14: 485; 22: 214; 23: 343; 25: 473; *see also* Soil mechanical analysis.
- mechanical analyses, relation to—
  - crop production, 5: 418.
  - moisture equivalent of soils, 4: 471; 9: 159.
- mechanical composition of—
  - loess, in Nebraska, 1: 405.
  - three synthetic, 4: 473.
- method for determining volume-weight of, 25: 211.
- mineral, chemico-physical influences of lime on, 18: 387.
- moisture—*see also* Moisture, Soil moisture, Water.
  - capacity of, and wilting point, 14: 159.
  - cell sap in roots and tops of plants and, 9: 224.
  - equivalent, 25: 16; *see also* Moisture equivalent.
  - irrigated soils, 8: 303.
  - movement of, 25: 17.
  - relation to plants and, 3: 129.
  - relationships of, 20: 243.

**Soils—(continued)**

monocalcium phosphate reactions with, 24: 263.

**muck—**

adsorption of potassium by, 20: 243.  
frost occurrence in, 14: 383.

native materials in, solubility of, as affected by calcium and magnesium 16: 449.

nitrate—*see also* Nitrate, Nitrates.

accumulation in, 1: 333.  
formation in, 1: 317.  
in, after harvesting crops, 10: 259.  
relationship of, in native rock and cultivated, 2: 353.  
utilization by bacteria, 1: 333.

**nitre—**

geologic and geographic distribution, 2: 358.

reclamation and utilization, 2: 358.

nitric acid digestion, plant food constituents of, 15: 383.

nitriying power, relation to—

ammonia content, 3: 408.  
crop production, 10: 36.

nitrification in—*see also* Nitrification.

Miami, 1: 320.  
South African, 12: 301.

nitrite, quantitative determination of, 25: 393.

nitrous nitrogen in irrigated, 3: 149.

**of—**

Alabama, 4: 91.

Central America, 21: 351.

Cuba (book review), 25: 495.

different regions of the United States, solubility of, 10: 229.

Egypt, H-ion concentration of, 14: 229.

Greece, fertility of the, 13: 63.

Italy, with special reference to Lombardy, 19: 83.

Java, H-ion concentration of, 14: 228.

South Africa, nitrification in, 12: 301; 18: 219.

Texas, Hildgo County, 23: 475.

West Florida, 4: 91.

**of California—**

H-ion concentration of, 14: 230.

nitrate nitrogen in, 10: 266.

nitrogen recovered by crops from, 10: 283.

**of Kansas—**

nitrate nitrogen in, 10: 266.

**Soils—****of Kansas—(continued)**

nitrogen recovered by crops from, 10: 280.

**of Virginia—**

nitrate nitrogen in, 10: 266.

nitrogen recovered by crops from, 10: 281.

old, solubility of, 10: 228.

**organic—**

soluble substances in, 11: 233.

water removed by, 20: 244.

organic matter—*see also* Organic matter.

absorption of ammonia by, 2: 325.

decomposition of, in, 17: 293.

oxidation by nitric acid, 2: 325.

organic phosphorus content of, 10: 127; 13: 119.

organisms in cultivated, 3: 404.

oxidation and reduction, 20: 278.

peat—*see also* Peat.

acidity studies, 4: 124; 20: 357.

calcium in, 1: 505.

humic acids in, 22: 216.

lime in, 5: 213.

mixture of acid, with sulfur and rock phosphate, 6: 358.

phosphoric acid in, 5: 213; 11: 111.

potassium-bearing minerals addition of, to, 8: 281.

sulfides in Minnesota, 14: 167.

petroleum containing, vegetative growth in, 8: 67.

physical characteristics of, measurement of, 24: 373.

physical effects of carbohydrates on, 6: 437.

physical properties of, as affected by ignition, 17: 135.

physico-chemical studies of heavy, 17: 411.

**podzol type of—**

determination of, 17: 429.

root system of grasses in, 17: 429.

prairie, phosphorus in, 2: 493.

productivity of, and their pH values, 14: 22.

protein decomposition in, 1: 509.

rare-earth metals in, 15: 7.

reducing conditions in, significance of, 9: 212.

reversion of phosphorus pentoxide in, 25: 463.



**Soils—(continued)**

- rice, fertility of, and their titration curves, 14: 21.
- salt—
  - accumulation in Ohio, 1: 575.
  - absorption of, from, by seeds, 3: 271.
  - content of field, studies, 13: 433.
- sandy, moisture supply in, 21: 197; 24: 231.
- saturation degree of, 18: 393.
- seed germination in heated, 7: 1.
- semi-arid, nitrogen in, 8: 33.
- serpentine—
  - composition of, 22: 293.
  - infertility of, 22: 291.
- silica in Nebraska, 1: 419.
- shrinkage of, 25: 165.
- sodium carbonate—*see also* Sodium carbonate.
  - adsorption phenomena of, 16: 315.
  - sodium bicarbonate in, study, 16: 295.
- soluble material—
  - at various depths, 11: 241.
  - freezing-point depressions showing, 13: 436.
  - in organic, 11: 233.
  - in virgin and cultivated, 13: 440.
  - moisture effects on, 11: 235.
  - rainfall influence on, 13: 443.
  - storage effects on, 13: 190.
  - temperature effects on, 11: 235.
  - water extraction of, 13: 188.
- soluble material in, as measured by the freezing-point method, 7: 253.
- soluble substances in, from various regions, 10: 219.
- sourness of, versus acidity of, 9: 211.
- South-African, nitrification in, 18: 219.
- specific gravity (apparent) determination of, 21: 418.
- specific gravity, relation to—
  - ammonia absorption, 2: 317.
  - texture of, 4: 472.
- statistical study of, 17: 469.
- sub-humid, nitrogen in, 8: 33.
- suction force of, and colloidal behavior, 20: 169; 24: 71.
- sulfates, determination of volumetric, in water extracts, 4: 477.
- sulfifying power of Virginia, 10: 323.
- sulfur—*see also* Sulfur, Sulfur oxidation.
  - effects in, 12: 197.
  - in Iowa, 1: 340.

**Soils—****sulfur—(continued)**

- in Kansas, 3: 139.
- in Nebraska, 1: 419.
- oxidation in, 1: 339, 356.
- titanium, *see* Titanium.
- tobacco—
  - H-ion concentration effect on, 14: 228.
  - nitrification in, 18: 233.
  - toxic properties of, 15: 109; *see also* Toxins, Toxicity.
- tropical—
  - chemical composition of, 21: 354.
  - nitrification and denitrification in, 17: 433.
  - weathering of, 21: 359.
  - vapor pressure of, 11: 409; 17: 1; 25: 485.
  - vegetative growth in, containing petroleum, 8: 67.
  - virgin—
    - calcium content of, 8: 323.
    - composition of materials going in solution from, 16: 440.
    - depleted and, studies on, 16: 433.
    - formation of soluble material in, 7: 253.
    - grassland, organic matter and nitrogen in, 24: 421.
    - magnesium content of, 8: 323.
    - versus cultivated, analyses, 8: 4.
  - volatile matter in loess, 1: 229.
  - volume-weight determinations, 25: 207.
- water—
  - absorption by, forces influencing, 20: 67.
  - distribution of, in, 9: 409.
  - extract of, composition, 11: 142.
  - logged, reduction potentials of, 9: 199.
  - movement, discussion, 4: 244.
  - of constitution in loess, 1: 229.
  - soluble matter in, 1: 39, 421; 25: 163.
  - wilting point of plants as influenced by climate of, 1: 10.
  - wind-blown, bacterial flora of, 21: 145; 24: 39, 335.
- Solubility laws, relation to fertilizers, 15: 84.
- Solution cultures, *see* Nutrient solutions.
- Soot, sulfur and bases brought in, by rain-water, 15: 224.
- Sorghum—
  - hydrocyanic acid in, 17: 316.
  - soil-nitrogen availability as indicated by, 17: 315.

**Soybeans—**

- abnormal stem growth of, in Shive's three-salt solution, 6: 479.
  - acidity and growth of, 13: 463.
  - as affected by—
    - acid soil, 7: 455.
    - ammonium phosphate, 5: 63.
    - ammonium sulfate, 5: 63, 123.
    - calcium salts, 14: 238.
    - dextrin, 14: 238.
    - fertilizer treatment, 6: 81.
    - magnesium silicate, 14: 238.
    - mineral fertilizers, 17: 439.
    - reaction, 13: 271.
    - salts, 1: 163.
    - silica, 14: 238.
    - sulfur oxidation, 14: 247.
  - composition of—
    - as affected by fertilizer treatment, 6: 81.
    - as compared with that of nodules, 11: 126.
    - grown in solution cultures, 20: 1.
  - germination, effect on nodule forming bacteria, 7: 237.
  - growth of, in culture solutions, 24: 139.
  - inoculation, effect on—
    - composition of, 7: 459.
    - nitrogen content of, 1: 579; 7: 455.
    - yield, 7: 455.
  - inoculation experiments with *B. radicola* on, 7: 221.
  - juice, H-ion concentration of, 7: 470; 8: 236; 13: 462.
  - lime, effect on—
    - composition of, 7: 455.
    - nitrogen content of, 7: 455.
    - yield, 7: 455.
  - nitrate nitrogen in different parts of, 10: 346.
  - nitrogen balance in soil grown with, 9: 292.
  - nitrogen fixation by, 11: 469.
  - nitrogen forms in nodules of, 11: 123.
  - nodulation of, a note, 17: 449.
  - nodule formation on, 6: 81; 9: 291; 13: 271; 14: 417; 15: 277.
  - phosphorus assimilation by, 23: 462.
  - potassium assimilation by, 23: 462.
  - protein content, 1: 171; 22: 175.
  - toxicity of monobasic phosphates to, 5: 87.
- Sphagnum-moss**, relation to nematode control, 4: 486.

**Starch—**

- effect on potassium absorption, 15: 172.
- hydrolysis of, by actinomyces, 8: 86.

**Statistical—**

- methods, soil variability as determined by, 17: 343.
- study of soil distribution according size particles, 17: 469.

**Straw—**

- decomposition of, 24: 309.
- effect on—
  - biological processes in the soil, 12: 233.
  - crop growth, 20: 159.
  - nitrate accumulation, 20: 159.
- humified, potash from, 19: 111.
- mulch, nitrate accumulation under, 14: 299; 20: 253.
- system of soil fertility in relation to, 21: 393.

**Strontium**, determination of, in soils, 15: 5.

**Subsoils—**

- alfalfa nutrition as related to, 23: 261.
  - analysis of, 15: 5.
  - calcium-magnesium interchange in, 16: 321.
  - effect on—
    - calcium retention and leaching, 7: 384.
    - hydrolysis of fibrin, 3: 319.
  - formation of soluble material in, 10: 223.
  - hydrolysis of—
    - fibrin in, 3: 311.
    - sphagnum-covered peat, 3: 312.
  - mineralogical examination of, 15: 10.
  - nitrogen enrichment with alfalfa, 3: 34.
  - nitrogen in, 3: 31.
  - nutrients availability in, 19: 275; 23: 261.
  - organic carbon in, as affected by cropping, 8: 31.
  - organic matter in, 13: 4.
  - potassium availability of, in, 19: 105.
  - potassium leachings from, 8: 352.
  - productivity of semi-arid, compared with surface soils, 3: 33.
- rawness—**
- cause of, in humid region, 7: 233.
  - of loess, in Nebraska, 3: 9.
  - of some humid, 5: 393.
- solubility of**, from cropped and virgin, 16: 437.
- sterilized**, behavior of, 7: 26.
- unproductivity of raw**, 7: 233.

**Sugar—**

- cane juice, as affected by—
  - altitude, 17: 468.
  - soil composition, 17: 468.
  - soil reaction, 17: 468.
- effect of, on germination of various seeds, 6: 339.
- occurrence of, in plants grown on different concentrations of nitrates, 10: 347.

**Sulfate—**

- benzidine, oxidation of, for determination of sulfates, 8: 61.
- effect on root development of alfalfa, 10: 305.
- ferrous in nutrient solution for wheat, 11: 93.
- production of, in humid and arid soils, 21: 233.
- retention of, as affected by calcium hydroxide, 17: 70.
- solubility of, as affected by magnesium hydroxide and carbonate, 17: 74.
- solution of, preparation of, from soil, 8: 62.

**Sulfates—**

- as fertilizers, 7: 131.
- calcium and magnesium effects on outgo of, 16: 1, 159.
- climatic effects on, in soil, 1: 35, 42.
- determination of—
  - benzidine sulfate oxidation method, 8: 61.
  - factors influencing, 13: 231.
  - volumetric method, 4: 477; 8: 61.
- effect on—
  - ammonification, 2: 465.
  - manure fermentation, 4: 79.
  - phosphorus, water soluble and organic, 7: 150.
  - soils, 11: 144.
  - soybean composition, 6: 114.
- ferrous sulfate effects on outgo of, 16: 159.
- in loess soil, 2: 384.
- in Wyoming soils, 4: 208.
- losses of, relation to sulfur sources, 16: 25.
- outgo of, from lysimeters, 22: 21; 23: 175.
- pyrite effects on outgo of, 16: 159.
- retention of, as affected by lime, 19: 125.
- sulfur effects on outgo of, 16: 159.

**Sulfides**, occurrence of, in peat soils, 14: 167.

**Sulfification—see also Sulfur oxidation.**

- as affected by—
  - calcium carbonate, 7: 381.
  - cropped soils, 19: 423.
- effect on—
  - aluminum solubility in soils, 13: 99.
  - potassium and soil constituents, 7: 183.
- studies in, 1: 339; 5: 311; 6: 351.

**Sulfur—**

- acetone method of extracting from the soil, 20: 393.
- alkali soil treatment with, 2: 205; 11: 385; 17: 398.
- as a fertilizer, 11: 60; 14: 421.
- availability of various forms of, 25: 447.
- composts in relation to plant nutrition, 11: 49; 14: 255.
- conservation in soils, 4: 231.
- effect on—
  - alfalfa composition and yield, 16: 127.
  - calcium leachings, 16: 450.
  - crop production, 3: 146; 18: 111.
  - crops and soil, 18: 111.
  - hydrogen-ion concentration of soils, 12: 197.
  - magnesium leachings, 16: 451.
  - manure fermentation, 4: 79; 11: 57.
  - nitrate leachings, 19: 309.
  - nitrogen content of legumes, 11: 445.
  - nodule of soybeans, 14: 252.
  - phosphates, insoluble, 5: 266.
  - potassium solubility, 16: 134.
  - soil, 12: 197; 18: 111.
  - soybean composition, 6: 113.
- fertilizing, effects of, 19: 82.
- in—
  - ammonium sulfate, significance for soils, 5: 81.
  - crops, 14: 422.
  - drainage water, 15: 154.
  - grain grown under irrigation, 19: 325.
  - Kansas soils, 3: 139.
  - Nebraska soils, 1: 419.
  - rainwater, 14: 363; 15: 152, 205.
  - virgin versus cultivated soils, 3: 143.
- inoculated—
  - and uninoculated, comparison, 11: 75; 14: 307.
  - as plant-food solvent, 11: 87.
- inversion of sugar by, 5: 341.
- losses due to cultivation, 3: 139.
- manure and rock phosphate composts, 4: 269.

**Sulfur—(continued)**

- method for determining, in—
  - plants, 3: 141.
  - soil, 14: 423; 18: 371; 20: 393.
- nitrogen ratio, 19: 328.
- oxidation—
  - in soils, 1: 339, 356, 533; 2: 499; 4: 269; 5: 313; 10: 309; 14: 217.
  - microorganisms, *see* Microorganisms, Bacteria.
  - non-biological, 11: 249.
  - rate of, 20: 443; 25: 448.
  - studies in, 13: 107; 14: 217; 16: 479.
- oxidation, as affected by—
  - aeration, 13: 107.
  - calcium carbonate, 1: 359; 11: 252.
  - dolomite, 11: 252.
  - fineness of grinding, 21: 489.
  - gypsum, 1: 357.
  - iron, 11: 252.
  - limonite, 11: 252.
  - magnesium carbonate, 1: 359; 11: 252.
  - moisture factor, 13: 111; 14: 479.
  - peat, 5: 282.
  - reaction of soil, 10: 327; 13: 112.
- oxidation, effect on—
  - alkalinity of soil, 13: 216.
  - ammonification, 5: 319.
  - biological flora, 13: 220; 14: 247; 21: 245.
  - greensand marl, 14: 307.
  - microorganisms in soil, 25: 450.
  - mineral solubility, 18: 317.
  - nitrification, 5: 317; 19: 427.
  - potassium leachings, 7: 378.
  - rock phosphate, 6: 354; 10: 315.
  - soil solution, 25: 152.
  - soybeans, 14: 247.
  - structure of soil, 13: 221.
  - sulfate use in humid and arid soils, 21: 233.
- oxidation, relation to—
  - acidity and alkalinity, 5: 316; 7: 185.
  - alkali soils, 13: 215.
  - available phosphates, 10: 327; 13: 113.
  - phosphate solubility, 1: 533; 2: 499; 5: 245.
  - plant growth, 5: 257.
  - potato scab, 9: 393.
  - soil acidity, 9: 393; 14: 259.
  - sulfate losses from soil leachings, 16: 25, 159.
  - water holding capacity of soils, 16: 485.

**Sulfur—(continued)**

- phosphate composts, experiments with, 5: 243, 261; 13: 107.
- rock phosphate composting with, 10: 315, 327; 11: 49, 89; 13: 107; 14: 37, 479; 15: 41, 93; 16: 214.
- value of, for killing live stumps, 9: 181.
- water soluble plant food in soil treated with, 18: 318.
- Sulfuric acid**, colloid coagulation with, 17: 401, 403.
- Superphosphate**—
  - availability of, in soils, 17: 39.
  - comparative effects of, against composted rock phosphate, 4: 339.
  - effect on—
    - aluminum salts in soils, 10: 169; 19: 401.
    - ammonia absorption, 2: 327.
    - ammonia distribution, 2: 337.
    - ammonification, 4: 376.
    - bases in soil, 19: 401.
    - composition of soybeans, 6: 99.
    - hydrogen-ion concentration of soil, 19: 401.
    - iron in soil, 19: 401.
    - potassium solubility, 6: 245.
    - sulfate production, 1: 343.
  - Lipman process of, production, 14: 479; 15: 41, 93.
  - movement of, through limed and unlimed soils, 19: 461.
  - phosphorus utilization by corn from, 24: 9.
  - reversion of, in acid soils, 15: 367.
- Surface tension** determination of, in alkali soil extracts, 17: 396.

**T****Temperature**, effect on—*see* also Heat.

- actinomyces, 8: 184.
- media for microorganisms, 2: 276.
- nitrate production, 19: 381.
- root-nematode, 4: 484.
- salt movement in soils, 19: 459.
- seed germination, 7: 11.
- water freezing in leaves of plants, 9: 218.
- Timothy**, carbon-nitrogen ratio studies, 1: 51.
- Tillage**, effect on biological activities in the soil, 16: 252.

**Titanium—**

- determination in soils, 15: 5.
- effect on phosphorus determination in soils, 4: 310.
- in drift soils of Minnesota, 11: 181.
- in Nebraska soils, 1: 421.

**Tobacco—**

- as affected by magnesium oxide, 19: 333.
- effect on soil constituents, 15: 386.

**Toluene, effect on—**

- ammonification, 2: 370.
- bacterial numbers, 2: 370; 16: 148.
- biological activities in the soil, 16: 262.
- lime requirement, 6: 45.

**Toxic—**

- factors in soil extracts, 6: 264.
- properties of soils due to heating, 7: 69.
- studies on the, properties of soils, 15: 109.
- substances, nature of, produced on heating, 7: 39.

**Toxicity—**

- alkali salts, 6: 463.
- iron and manganese forms as causes of, 23: 165.
- magnesium induced, 15: 427; 19: 331.
- manganese, 8: 69; 23: 165.
- monobasic phosphates, 5: 87.
- seed, due to heating of soil, 7: 8.
- soybean excretion, on legume bacteria, 7: 240.
- theories as to, of salts, 12: 165.

**Toxins—**

- Kosaroff's theory of, 7: 74.
- Pickering theory of, due to heating of soils, 7: 40.
- plant, soil constituents inhibiting action of, 3: 333.

**Transpiration—**

- and water requirement, 5: 141; 6: 27.
- in wheat grown in sand cultures, 2: 224.
- relation of, to yields, 6: 27.

**Triangular diagram in—**

- fertilizer studies, 7: 162.
- nutrient solution studies, 5: 126.
- sand cultures study, 2: 225.

**U****Urea—**

- decomposition of, in the soil, 20: 354.
- effect on nitrate determination, 4: 198.
- efficiency of, as fertilizer in presence of dicyandiamid and guanyl urea sulfate, 17: 492.

**Urea—(continued)**

- in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 185.
- nitrification of, effect on phosphate availability, 13: 376.

**Uric acid** in sterile cultures for plants, 3: 187.

**V****Vanadium—**

- determination in soils, 15: 5.
- in phosphorus determination, 2: 299.

**Vanillic acid**, formation and destruction of, 7: 479.

**Vanillin—**

- destruction of, by a soil bacterium, 10: 237.

determination of, 10: 238.

injury from, in soil, 2: 97.

method for determining, 7: 476, 482.

oxidation of, by soil bacteria, 7: 475.

toxicity of, to plants, 3: 346.

**Vapor pressure—**

- apparatus for determining, 11: 412.
- aqueous, of soils, 25: 409, 485.
- lowering of, in alkali soil, 17: 406.
- of soils, 11: 409; 17: 1.

**Volatile matter** in loess soil, 2: 384.

**Volcanic ash**, nitric nitrogen in, 2: 348.

**Volume—**

- molecular concentrations of 36 three-salt solutions, 2: 222.
- weight determinations, 20: 420.

**W**

**Wagner**, Paul, eightieth anniversary of the birth of, 15: 67.

**Wagner**, pots, accumulation of calcium and magnesium in, 15: 433.

**Water—**

- absorption of, by alfalfa, 18: 361.
- action of, on clay boulders, 3: 513.
- adhesion of, definition, 23: 315.
- amount of, freezing in leaves, 9: 218.
- "artificial root" for determining, supplying power of soils, 9: 472.
- calculation of, 20: 245.
- capacity, relation of soil type and, to irrigation requirement, 14: 163.
- capillary, definition, 23: 316; *see also* Capillarity.
- content of soil and soil solution, 3: 113.
- crop producing power of, 14: 379.
- determination of, in soil on volume basis, 4: 263.

**Water—(continued)**

- distribution of, in soils, 9: 409.
- effect on soil granulation, 18: 103.
- extracts—
  - composition of, from manure or soil-manure mixtures, 7: 263.
  - ratio of, to soil, 9: 45.
  - soil productivity and, 5: 416.
  - soil solution and, a comparison, 14: 191.
  - toxic material in, of soils, 7: 43.
- film, thickness of, 17: 15.
- fixation of, from soil-manure mixtures, 7: 265.
- forms of, in soil, 11: 38.
- freezing and thawing effects on, content of soils, 11: 134.
- holding capacity, relation to absorption of ammonia, 2: 317.
- hygroscopic, definition, 23: 316.
- in manure, 7: 262.
- in manure-soil mixtures, 7: 262.
- investigation of, from Uadi-Gattary river, Cyrenaica, 19: 39.
- liberation of, by volatile antiseptics, 3: 355.
- movement—
  - equations for studying rate of, 4: 248.
  - fluctuations in the rate of, 4: 262.
  - rate of in aerated soils, 4: 239.
- of constitution in drift soils, 11: 190.
- relation to fertility, 14: 381.
- removal of, by organic soils, 20: 244.
- requirement of plants and yields, 6: 29.
- runoff, loss of soluble salts in, 21: 401.
- soluble constituents of soils, review of subject, 25: 163.
- soluble matter in soils, 1: 39, 421; 2: 377.
- soluble matter, relation to—
  - ammonia absorption, 2: 322.
  - drying of soils, 13: 173.
- sulfates in, extracts of soils, 4: 477.
- supplying power of soils and wilting of plants, 9: 469.
- translocation in soils, 3: 119.
- transpiration, 5: 141.
- unfree, in soils at different moisture contents, 11: 255.
- unfree, relation to—
  - ignited soil, 17: 138.
  - moisture equivalent and heat of wetting, 14: 431.

**Water—(continued)**

- utilization of, by plants, 21: 75.
  - vapor, movement of, through quartz flour, 13: 57.
- Wheat—**
- calcium content of, 15: 375.
  - composition of, grown in presence of sodium chloride, 22: 310.
  - fertilizer nutrients for, 19: 169.
  - growth, as affected by—
    - ammonium phosphate and ammonium sulfate, 5: 63; 23: 206.
    - osmotic pressure, 15: 230.
    - sodium nitrate, 23: 206.
  - growth of—
    - in one-salt nutrient solution, 15: 69.
    - sand cultures, 2: 207.
  - nitrate and, yields, 24: 247.
  - protein content of—
    - relation to length of growing period, 13: 135.
    - relation to moisture and nitrogen, 18: 173.
  - seed-bed, bacterial activity in, 2: 193.
  - yield of, relation to moisture and available nitrogen, 18: 173.

**Wilting coefficient, relation to—**

- moisture equivalent, 8: 306.
- vapor pressure, 11: 427.

**Wood—**

- pentosans, destruction of, by molds, 15: 482.
- various kinds of, addition to soils and plant growth, 17: 199.

**Y**

- Yeasts, occurrence of, in soil, 23: 33.**

**Z**

- Zeolites, natural, in soil, 19: 39.**
- Zeolitic constituents, Hilgard method for determining, 1: 412.**
- Zinc—**
  - sulfate, effect on soybean composition, 6: 114.
  - sulfide—
    - oxidation of, by microorganisms, 14: 459.
    - oxidation of, carried by dolomite, 16: 35.
- Zirconium, determination of, in soils, 15: 5.**